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NEITHER the American people nor those of Cuba are holding up recognition of the Grau government; it is the obstinacy or pique of a single individual—Sumner Welles, our Ambassador. Despite unprecedented difficulties the Grau regime has lasted more than two months, and apparently has just put down a serious rebellion. Does the United States want to have the Grau regime overthrown? Probably it can succeed in doing this if it waits long enough and withholds its recognition, for failure to recognize the government will mean ultimately inability on its part to work out a constructive program. To the criticism that the Grau administration is not sufficiently "representative," it may be replied that it is as much so as the Cespedes government which Mr. Welles helped to instal with his blessing. It is no legitimate function of the United States to pass judgment on the character of a Cuban government, but if Grau falls, Cuba is likely to have either another despotism—on the order of that of Machado—or a far more radical regime than now exists. Would Mr. Roosevelt prefer either of these alternatives? It is tragic that the United States should so completely fail in its opportunities in Cuba—a failure due not to lack of good intentions but to lack of understanding. It is paradoxical to preen ourselves on non-intervention when actually our attitude is intervention. While we are grateful to the Washington Administration for not sending in marines, its policy is likely to produce anarchy and so compel the very action it seeks to avoid. The demand of Senator King of Utah that Ambassador Welles be replaced ought to be heeded.

THE RAPPROCHEMENT between the United States and the Soviet Union and the decision of the Roosevelt Administration to remove the battle fleet from Pacific waters next summer have already had some effect on the political situation in the Far East. For one thing, Japanese liberals appear to have found fresh courage. Since the resignation of Baron Shidehara from the Foreign Ministry two years ago they have been discreetly silent, fearing that criticism of the army program would invite reprisals such as befell Baron Takuma Dan, the industrialist, and Premier Suyoshi Inukai, who, far from being a liberal, was an intensely patriotic conservative. Now the liberals are speaking out again, though still cautiously. The Japanese government likewise seems to have adopted a less bellicose attitude, especially in its relations with the Soviet Union. Even the acknowledged leader of the militarists, General Sadao Araki, the War Minister, has come forward with a proposal for a Far Eastern peace conference to which the leading Powers, including the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and France, would be invited. It is possible, since he includes Manchukuo among the "Powers" to be invited, that he believes this is one way of obtaining recognition of that puppet government. Yet the Araki proposal represents a change in the attitude of the militarists, for these nationalists have hitherto warmly contended that Asiatic problems were solely a matter of Asiatic concern and should be solved without help or interference from the Western Powers.

NATURALLY the Japanese change of heart, if it is indeed genuine, has not gone very far. The militarists and ultra-patriots compelled the court at Yokosuka to impose relatively light prison sentences on the assassins of Premier Inukai on November 9, although the prosecutor had asked that the men be put to death. And on November 8 the War Office announced that instead of reducing the army forces in Manchuria, as had been contemplated, it was increasing their strength by adding 10,000 men for "railway guard service." It is apparent that real reforms cannot be expected from the militarists. On the other hand, if either the militarists or liberals are disposed to interpret President Roosevelt's transfer of the battle fleet as an indication of a basic change in American policy they will be disappointed. Twice within the last few weeks American representatives at Geneva have made it clear that the United States regards Manchuria as being illegally occupied by Japanese military forces. The first time came when Stuart Fuller, speaking for the State Department at a public session of the Advisory Opium Commission, denounced Manchukuo's "state opium monopoly." Some days later the State Department formally notified the League of Nations that it could under no circumstances approve of Manchukuo's adherence to the Kellogg Pact or any


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other multilateral treaty to which it is a party. There can be no question that the United States wants to remain on friendly terms with Japan, but it will not buy Japanese friendship at the expense of the peace treaties or by repudiating the Stimson doctrine of non-recognition of the Japanese conquest of Manchuria.

GREAT BRITAIN'S WITHDRAWAL from the tariff truce was not entirely unexpected. Italy also seems practically to have withdrawn its adherence. The armistice in the international trade war was arranged with a view to giving the world a breathing spell during which, or so it was hoped, the London Economic Conference could do something to end the economic war. But the London conference failed and hostilities were resumed. The Netherlands, the Irish Free State, Sweden, and Switzerland withdrew from the truce. It was not their action, however, that prompted Walter Runciman, president of the Board of Trade, to announce that the British government was following suit. It would be safer to attribute this decision to the Roosevelt currency and gold policy. The Runciman announcement was made immediately after the dollar had dropped below the old gold-standard parity with the pound sterling. British manufacturers saw their home market being flooded with cheap American goods. They insisted upon increased protection against such imports. In view of this situation and because American reservations make the tariff truce virtually meaningless so far as the United States is concerned, it is rather ironical to find Secretary of State Hull announcing that this country will continue to abide by the truce. Yet, hopeless though the case appears to be, we feel that we must commend Mr. Hull for the stand he has taken. The Secretary of State is fighting for an idea. He understands that, barring a revolutionary reconstruction of the world's economic system, the task of solving our trade problems is bound to be slow and painful. It must obviously begin with a truce that will halt the present trend toward ever higher trade barriers. To abandon this fight is to surrender to the forces that have been slowly paralyzing world trade.

OUR READERS will be interested in the appointment of Ernest Gruening, one of *The Nation's* Board of Editors, as the adviser to the American delegation to the Pan-American Conference to be held in Montevideo in December. Previous conferences have been of little value in the achievement of their ostensible purpose—the development of an understanding relationship between the United States and the countries of Latin America. Too often, in fact, the tactics of the delegates from the United States have served only to intensify the fears and resentments of nations already acutely aware of our dominating economic and political power. These fears have been met by vague expressions of good-will coupled with a cynical evasion of the real problems at issue. It is to be hoped that the appointment of Mr. Gruening as adviser to the delegation now on its way to Uruguay is to be taken as evidence that the Administration seriously intends to depart from the tactics of its predecessors and express in the concrete terms so long advocated by *The Nation* a policy of friendly cooperation. In another issue we plan to discuss in detail the work that the coming conference should undertake and the constructive results that it might accomplish in various ways.

EVIDENTLY in response to protests from all over the country, the United States Civil Service Commission has decided to amend its recently adopted rule fixing the maximum age of applicants for typists and stenographers at forty. It has extended the age limit to fifty-three. According to the official announcement of the change, it was made "in view of the present unemployment situation." This, of course, is almost as nonsensical as was the former rule. Not because many persons are out of work, but because forty is not an age accompanied by such senility as to make typewriting and stenography—or any other branch of intellectual work—impossible, the rule should stay amended. Baseball players and prize fighters may be through at forty. But the human brain, such as it is, is of more durable material. And to bar persons over forty from any occupations except those requiring the utmost of brute force or youthful quickness is entirely indefensible.

NINE MONTHS AGO, with a new and more enlightened regime impending in Washington, the electric utilities of America assumed the garb of repentant sinners. They announced the abandonment of their political and propagandist activities and solemnly proclaimed their purpose to attend strictly to the electric business. The far-flung propaganda in schools and colleges, the subsidizing of professors, the rewriting and substitution of textbooks, the hiring of clubwomen as ghost writers, the domination of legislatures and public-service commissions—all this was to be no more. And to emphasize the metamorphosis, the National Electric Light Association was formally extinguished, while from its ashes, phoenix-like, the Edison Electric Institute, purified and sanctified, arose. At the time *The Nation,* noting that the old officials (minus the Insulls, who were unavoidably absent) were directing the policies of the new organization, ventured to lift a skeptical eyelid. Alas, too soon are our suspicions confirmed! The leading editorial in a recent *Electrical World* urges the utilities to "take political action" and utility officials to "make politics their major concern." This sounds like a return to the old form. But it is a newer and better form. "This does not mean," declares the power-industry organ, "potshotting at agitators, at radical politicians, placing definite facts in pamphlets for public distribution, an advertising campaign, or a lobbying contact with legislative bodies—these are incomplete, incorrect, and amateurish. It means a complete and thoughtfully prepared political program . . . in each community served, as well as in the State and national political forums. It means a strong organization based upon political competency; it means definite political action in the political arena."

EVERY USER of the highways must be concerned with the increasing appearance there of enormous vans which roar or groan along to the danger and inconvenience of all ordinary vehicles. These huge power plants on wheels are of a length, breadth, and weight wholly unfitted to move with ordinary traffic. They occupy the entire roadway in making a sharp turn and grind to pieces pavements which were never intended for such tonnage. Probably they would have been curbed long ago but for the difficulty in getting interstate action. We are glad to note, therefore, that representatives of seventeen States met recently in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, at the invitation of the State legislature. They decided that

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seventeen States were too many to act together at this time. Subsequent meetings of smaller groups of States are to be arranged, but it was unanimously resolved that the interest of taxpayers and private non-commercial motorists must be recognized as paramount in determining the dimensions and weights of motor vehicles. In aligning the railways with the users of ordinary cars at the conference, J. J. Pelley, president of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, said that 97 per cent of the users of the highways were small vehicles. Trucks and buses contributed only 12 per cent of the vehicle fees and gasoline taxes, while wider and heavier highways for their accommodation cost 30 to 50 per cent of the total expenditures. Difference of opinion developed chiefly in regard to the length of trucks and truck-trailers. Some States allow as much as eighty-five feet. The American Association of State Highway Officials has voted for a maximum length of forty-five feet for truck and trailer. Even that is too liberal.

THAT BIRTH-CONTROL legislation, as it exists, is entirely class legislation would be plain to almost anyone, even if it were not to be the main contention of the American Conference on Birth Control and National Recovery, to be held in Washington in January. The poor—who need it most—are unable to get information in regard to contraception, contraceptive materials are not available for them, and at a time when family limitation is imperative in many cases, owing to the scarcity of income, they are less able than in more normal times to buy the materials which almost any drugstore sells. The conference will urge the adoption of appropriate legislation for the widespread dissemination of birth-control information as a part of the national-recovery program. At the same time it will protest against the general infraction of the law by the sale of products which make contraceptive claims that are often entirely unfounded. Margaret Sanger, commenting on the purpose of the national conference, said: "We are striving to mobilize public sentiment in favor of the bill now pending in Congress which would amend the present postal laws and thus would make it possible for hospitals and other medical agencies to give contraceptive service to the poor." It hardly seems necessary to add that this is a desirable objective, but the powerful opposition which has to date kept such laws off the statute books makes it necessary to exert all possible pressure in their favor.

GOVERNMENT BY INITIAL, as the Drifter calls it, has achieved one important victory. The C. C. C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) has made great headway in halting the insidious march of soil erosion which has been robbing us—in bad years as well as good—of a billion and a half tons of dirt and 54,000,000,000 pounds of phosphoric acid, nitrogen, and potash. According to the Forest Service, 103 emergency conservation work camps were established this year in badly eroded areas. When farmers were first approached for contracts to permit the erection of erosion-control dams on their land, their response was slow. Now they are beginning to learn the practical benefits of heading off gullies that eat into rich fields and carry their best soil into the nearest valley. The C. C. C. has planted millions of seedling trees in various Middle Western States to act as soil binders and to give employment to land so worn down by years of erosion that it can no longer grow any crop but trees. In Indiana alone 22,000,000 black-locust seedlings have been set out. The Forest Service, as usual, is doing a necessary job expertly. And its educational effect upon the farmer is not its least important one. He is learning, for instance, that the alternation of sudden floods and severe drought is not an inevitable cycle but the result of preventable erosion. It may not seem to him worth while at the moment to save his soil, but he may find a use for it when the Forest Service or some other efficient authority has discovered a way of stopping the "inevitable" business cycle, and the vast areas laid waste by the erosions of our leading bankers have been planted with a thick growth of government trees.

WHAT the well-dressed Soviet envoy wears has been a matter of utmost interest to reporters recounting the visit of Maxim Litvinov to Washington. The Baltimore *Sun* reports that when he got off the boat in New York "his suit was finely tailored—of blue." According to the New York *Herald Tribune,* at the same moment Mr. Litvinov was wearing a "black fedora hat, double-breasted blue overcoat, and striped trousers." And by the time he had arrived at Washington and was arrayed for his call at the White House, the New York *Times* reporter described him as dressed in a "broad-brimmed black hat and black overcoat, with a white muffler knotted under his chin." It is, of course, possible that the Soviet envoy changed his clothes several times between the hour when the Berengaria docked and the hour of his meeting with President Roosevelt. Or perhaps the newspapers neglected to send their fashion reporters to cover the story and the news men proved themselves amateurs at sartorial observation. One can forgive them all when it is realized that whatever Mr. Litvinov wore was of secondary importance to what the Secretary of State should wear in making his acquaintance after so many years. Was it a formal occasion, demanding formal attire? Would it be quite the best of taste to greet a champion of the proletariat in a topper? Or was it merely preliminary to a formal occasion, when an ordinary—although doubtless finely tailored—business suit and a fedora would be more in keeping? These were the questions which shook the State Department to its foundations. Secretary Hull manfully solved the problem by choosing the business suit and the soft hat, thus probably putting the over-dressed Mr. Litvinov to shame if striped trousers is really what he wore. One will draw a long breath of relief after Russia is officially, fully, and completely recognized, and all occasions become automatically formal.

THE END OF PROHIBITION. *Time: December, 1919. Place: Any saloon. Dramatis Personae: Bartender, Customer, and Drinkers.*

BARTENDER, [*confidentially, as he wraps up a quart of excellent Scotch*]: You won't be able to buy this after January 19. You'd better lay in a supply.

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*Time: November, 1933. Place: Any speakeasy, cordial shoppe, blind pig, night club, restaurant, or hotel. Dramatis Personae: Bartender (or Bootlegger), Customer, and Drinkers.*

BARTENDER, [*confidentially, as he wraps up a quart of raw alcohol*]: You won't be able to buy this after December 6. You'd better lay in a supply.

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# Justice to Russia

*On January 4, 1919,* The Nation *published under the above title the editorial printed below. Since the date when this editorial first appeared five Presidents have sat in the White House. Russia has emerged from years of civil war, starvation, foreign invasion, and economic ruin with one of the stablest governments on the continent of Europe and a record of endurance and capacity for recovery that is the envy of the world. Long ago every great nation except the United States recognized the Soviet Government and has since dealt with it.* The Nation *reprints its editorial of fifteen years ago as a fitting commentary on present events.*

FROM the start the unfriendly intent behind Allied intervention in Russia was revealed by the frank though futile opposition of President Wilson. His objections gave the situation away; he admitted it to be a bad business before he became a partner in it, and his final surrender served only to emphasize the helplessness of benevolent intentions before the cynical determination of the controlling forces among the Allies. The excuses offered from time to time by the governments engaged in crushing what the Germans had left of the Russian Revolution were dishonest and hypocritical, but they served their purpose for the time being. They quieted the protests of timid liberals. They stilled the natural objections of those who pointed out that our armies had been enlisted to fight Germany, not to carry on military operations against Russian workingmen. But the propaganda of lies and suppression of facts was indeed a house built upon the sands.

Even to persons who had no way of knowing the flimsy stuff of which the building was made, the course of the Allies in Russia must sometimes have seemed perplexing. The newspapers talked of German arms and German gold, and autocratic rule in Russia, and disorder and terror, and the Czecho-Slovaks, but every man with sympathy and imagination must have seen something more. He must have seen a great people struggling with the hardest problems a nation has ever faced, struggling to build out of disorder and corruption a new untried society, struggling to demobilize without suffering and upheaval fourteen million war-sick men, and to create fresh forces to defend the new-born revolution, struggling against German domination and intrigue and Czarist plots, struggling most fiercely of all against the horror of starvation—struggling, yet holding its head high and shouting its faith to an indifferent world. He must have seen with wonder the spectacle of the "great democracies of the West" picking up their weapons and trying to destroy that young faith with arms and lies and starvation.

He should have seen something of this. But if he failed to see before, surely he must see now; for the whole structure of falsehoods and excuses has collapsed. The "unstable" Soviet Government has lasted a year and a month in the face of all its trials and its enemies. The need of an Eastern front against Germany disappeared with the signing of the armistice. The duty of chasing the Germans out of Russia disappeared at the same time, and the German troops were actually invited to stay in the invaded parts of Russia to help the Allies in "preserving order." The Czecho-Slovaks are discovered to have been offered by the Bolshevist Government free passage through Russia if they would return home in peace. Arms and materials of war are no longer in danger of falling into the hands of an imperial Germany. The most hostile critics of bolshevism are now loudest in their assertions of its complete hold upon the people of Russia. And as for the disorder and chaos and terror which have formed the most recent and widely advertised Allied excuse, the *New Statesman,* always bitter in its opposition to the Bolshevist Government, is reported as saying in its latest issue: "Order is more thoroughly established in Russia now than at any time since the fall of Czardom. Food distribution is better organized than at any time during the whole war. Factories are rapidly starting up again as fast as raw material can be obtained. . . . Terror has ceased. It has been greatly exaggerated."

New voices are being raised in every country demanding the facts about Russia, demanding the reasons for intervention, demanding action by the Peace Conference. It looks as though Allied statesmen would be forced to listen, at least, and to answer. The latest reports from Paris indicate that the Allies do not intend for the present to undertake intervention on a large scale, but are to keep their troops in Russia to give "moral support" to those "orderly" governments that are or may be in existence, and send forces into the Ukraine to relieve the departing Germans. This is the moment when the question is up for decision, when every word counts. Will the cry of the people be loud enough to carry through the padded walls of the palace at Versailles? The men who will gather there are commonly called statesmen; but they are also politicians, and politicians will always listen to the voice of the people if it is loud enough and speaks in no uncertain terms. Not as political partisans or "intellectuals" or "liberals," but as honest men of decent impulses, we Americans must tell the government that represents us the only course that seems to us to accord with the principles of self-determination which it has proclaimed.

We ask the withdrawal, as rapidly as physical conditions permit, of all American troops from Vladivostok and northern and southern Russia, and meanwhile the complete cessation of hostilities. We ask that the plans announced for a military expedition into the Ukraine be abandoned. We ask the recognition of the Soviet Government and, as the immediate consequence of such action, negotiations leading to the establishment of commercial relations with Russia. We ask that diplomatic and other accredited agents of the Soviet Government be received and that Boris Bakhmeteff, the so-called Russian Ambassador, be deprived of the diplomatic and financial privileges now accorded him. We ask that all unfriendly propaganda carried on by the Government of the United States or any of its branches immediately cease. We ask that the Government of the United States bring pressure upon the Allies to abandon their present policy in Russia and secure, under threat if need be of complete dissociation from their plans, the withdrawal of all Allied troops. We ask that representatives of the Soviet Government be admitted to the Peace Conference. We ask the prompt dispatch, in cooperation with the Soviet Government, of food and cloth-

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ing and necessary industrial and agricultural machinery for sale or free distribution. We ask these things for the Russian Revolution and the starving people of Russia; but even more we ask them in order that the United States may for its own sake share in righting an intolerable wrong, that no man in this war shall have died for empty words and worthless phrases, and that from this time forth the world may be made forever safe for hopeful experiments and new adventures in democracy.

# Liquor's New Problems

WITH the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the "noble experiment" has passed into history. The problem of legalized liquor control now confronts the people of America anew. It will be one of the first subjects of legislation by the Congress which convenes in January. Yet for this momentous change in our national *mores* little preparation has been made either among the prohibition or anti-prohibition forces.

Fortunately, however, the penetrating study initiated under the auspices of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., by a group of social scientists is at hand to serve as an admirable guide and approach to the problems now imminent through the impending return of legal liquor sales. The results of this study are embodied in a volume just published under the authorship of Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott.* This volume ought to be placed immediately in the hands of all who will participate in liquor-control legislation.

In its historical approach, the report points out that there is no "solution" of the liquor problem if by solution is meant some system or scheme which would be a short cut to virtue. It emphasizes the patent truth that no wave of the legislative wand can accomplish what the saints and sages have failed to achieve since the beginnings of ordered society. The attempt to control the use of intoxicating beverages by law is centuries old; almost every variety of statute has been tried in recent times. Thus, in a century, the people of one State, Massachusetts, have successively experimented with stringent license, qualified prohibition, the so-called "Maine type" of prohibition, high license with local option, a return to modified prohibition, low license, again high license with local option, and finally prohibition. The authors express the reasonable view that indifference or a laissez faire attitude on the part of the public and governing authorities will mean the inevitable return of evils of which the younger generation may perhaps now be unaware, but which stand out vividly in the memory of those of middle age or older. It is scarcely an exaggeration, they assert, to say that the liquor business as organized in the pre-prohibition days "stood for everything that decency was opposed to, and fought everything that decency desired." Among those abuses the saloon, in particular, must not be allowed to return. Equally important is the necessity of eradicating the peculiar consequences of prohibition—bootlegging, racketeering, gangsterism, the breakdown of governmental machinery.

Foremost of the report's recommendations is that the profit motive must be taken out of the liquor trade. Not only is this stressed as an axiom in the body of the book, but John D. Rockefeller, Jr., the study's sponsor, emphasizes it in his foreword. His position, as perhaps the outstanding pillar of the profit system, lends peculiar cogency to his view "that only after the profit motive is eliminated is there any hope of controlling the liquor traffic in the interest of a decent society. To approach the problem from any other angle is only to tinker with it and to insure failure. This point cannot be too heavily stressed."

In pursuance of this objective, the authors of the report incline strongly to the "authority plan"—State management of the distribution and sale of the heavier alcoholic beverages —which means simply elimination of the private retail liquor business. The State, they believe, should be the largest political entity to be considered from a legislative standpoint, except that manufacturing taxes should be exclusively federal. In urging the elimination of profit from the sale of liquor, the report makes a complete distinction between fermented and distilled liquors, between beer and light wine on the one hand and beverages of higher alcoholic content on the other. It is deemed indispensable to furthering temperance that 3.2 beer be considered as non-intoxicating, and that its sale be allowed by every agency that desires to dispense it, with permits so low in price as in no wise to interfere with consumption. Only somewhat slighter restrictions should govern the sale of light wines.

As for the heavier liquors, Messrs. Fosdick and Scott believe that the legislative program should be designed first and foremost to drive out the bootlegger, the racketeer, and the corrupt official by making taxes so low that the illicit liquor trade will be starved out. The objective of taxation should be primarily, they properly declare, neither revenue nor punishment but social regulation. After a preliminary period to be tested by experience, the price of beverages of high alcoholic content should be steadily increased through progressive taxation, with the object of limiting consumption. But this increase should not take place until the underground trade is virtually stamped out. Apart from import duties to be correlated with manufacturers' taxes levied by the federal government and reallocated in part to the liquor-selling States, it is recommended that all taxes be levied by the States. There should be no local levies. Nor should political entities yield to the temptation to load on to the liquor trade governmental deficits, which would defeat the essential objective of keeping prices low for a time and thereby driving the moonshiner, the bootlegger, and the whole system of corruption out of existence.

Finally, the study points out that the success with which the liquor problem is dealt with depends on the education of public opinion, and that legislation should be related to the existing attitude of the communities as and when it is modified by education and experience. "If the new system is not rooted in what the people of each State sincerely desire . . . it makes no difference how logical and complete it may appear as a statute—it cannot succeed."

*The Nation* believes that this intelligent and rational approach to the problem of alcohol consumption provides a challenge to the intelligence of our American society. We are starting again with a virtually clean slate. Have we the sense to benefit from past experience? Have we the courage to remove the profit from the sale of liquor? Have we the wisdom to keep the traffic free from its historic abuses?

* "Toward Liquor Control." By Raymond B. Fosdick and Albert L. Scott. With a Foreword by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Harper and Brothers. $2.

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# Our Courts on Trial

IN three trials set for early hearing the quality of American justice is to be tested, especially in regard to its capacity to triumph over race or class prejudice. We have in mind the case against George Crawford, colored, accused in Virginia of the murder of Mrs. Agnes Boeing Ilsley in 1932; the trial of the Negro young men indicted in Scottsboro, Alabama, for the rape of two white girls in 1931; and the proceedings against Athos Terzani, charged with the murder of Anthony Fierro in New York City last July.

Virginia and Alabama have reacted in opposite ways to national public opinion in regard to their administration of justice. Crawford's case was lifted into national prominence by the refusal of Judge Lowell of the federal bench in Massachusetts to send the accused man back to Virginia for trial on the ground that Negroes were denied representation on the grand jury which found the indictment. When the Supreme Court reversed this ruling, there was fear that Crawford might be railroaded to death by irate Virginians. But Virginia appears to have responded to national apprehension about her justice by an intelligent and humane effort to give Crawford equality before the law and to prosecute him in such a way that the outside world cannot do other than credit Virginians with fair play. It was first thought possible that the indictment proceedings might be reopened and a new grand jury assembled which would include Negroes. This has been denied by Judge McLemore, but—what is more important—it has been decided that Negroes shall be included in the panel for the trial jury before which Crawford is to be brought on December 12.

Unfortunately we cannot say as much in regard to the seven Negroes (originally nine) under accusation in Alabama. Instead of acting in a way to allay outside apprehension about the fairness of Alabama justice, the judicial officers and at least a large number of the people in general seem bent upon giving their State a bad name. Negroes have been lynched and terrorized; white attorneys trying to defend members of the race have been intimidated. After Judge Horton's annihilating criticism of the State's case, when he set aside the second verdict of guilty against Heywood Patterson, prosecution of all the defendants should in ordinary fairness have been dropped. But a new trial has been set for November 27 at Decatur. This will probably take place, although four men acting for the defense, but posing as salesmen, have interviewed more than 500 residents of Morgan County and signed affidavits which declare the existence of wide prejudice and a desire to destroy the Scottsboro prisoners by any means.

The prosecution of Terzani is not itself a manifestation of race prejudice, although it grew out of the attempt to spread Hitlerism in America. Terzani's comrade, Fierro, was killed in a riot at a meeting in New York of the discredited Khaki Shirts of Philadelphia. Terzani, an acknowledged radical, seems to have been picked as a victim to shield the actual culprit. "General" Smith of the Khaki Shirts is quoted by the Philadelphia *Record* as boasting: "We killed one radical and sent nineteen others to a hospital." Terzani deserves the best possible defense at his trial on December 12.

# John Jay Chapman

"WE shall not have good government in the United States till the people get over their personal dishonesty; but when we do get it, it will last without effort." We have taken this sentence from the writings of John Jay Chapman, whose death has just been recorded. More than thirty-six years ago he wrote, with his singularly frank and unsparing pen, that "the downfall of the old social system and the redistribution of every force in the community is inevitable." A leader in the good-government movement of the eighteen-nineties, Mr. Chapman was quick to see through the shams of the society in which he lived. He recognized that the real objective was not Tammany but the dishonest respectables who stood behind the bosses.

In his essay on "Society," Mr. Chapman portrayed himself as being in his club next to an important man whose corporation had just given a large sum to a political organization and near a lawyer who had just received a large fee from the city "for work which would not have brought him more than one-fifth of the amount if done for a private client," and a doctor who "knows what all these men are and how they make their money; yet he dines at their houses and gets business from them." It was plain why Mr. Chapman was not considered a very desirable person in the heyday of his political activity, especially when he published a little newspaper called the *Political Nursery* in which he told the plain, unvarnished truth about the powers that were at that time, including that great reformer, Theodore Roosevelt. But the years lapsed; his pen wandered off to other things and was silent for years at a time. One who should have been a great reform leader, because he united in his person culture—in the best sense—brilliance, amazing courage, and plain speaking to a degree, passed early out of the picture.

He was "too erratic" people said—that is, he was no respecter of persons. "His judgments were often wrong"—because they were unconventional. "It was not possible to agree with some of his contentions"—because they went to the heart of things in a most uncomfortable manner. "He would do such odd things"; yes, he once even went to Coatesville, Pennsylvania, just after it had been dishonored and disgraced by an especially brutal lynching, in order to voice his protest and utter a prayer; and he did that though he had but two auditors — one an old colored woman — just as Abraham Lincoln once had to deliver a weighty address to only two persons in Springfield, Illinois. Surely paladins of this type are not so frequent in American life that they can be well spared. It was partly ill-health that took him back to his study. When the war came—to bring him a dreadful personal loss and the most acute suffering of his life in the death of a beloved and most promising son—all the long pent-up feelings burst forth. For him, sincerely and truly, the Germans were the enemies of all, whose defeat was essential to the safety of everything that mankind held dear.

But nothing quite explains the failure of the promise of Chapman's youth. Was it that his comfort and his future were always assured? Wealth has much to plead guilty to; does it ever sin worse than when it silences a gifted pen, a brilliant mind, a noble soul, born without fear and enshrined in a physique intended by nature to stand out among all men?

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# Issues and Men

## An Open Letter the President Might Have Sent

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

*November 22, 1933*

DEAR FARMER COMPATRIOTS: Although within a week I am to take train to Des Moines in order to motor through Iowa, Kansas, Wisconsin, and Indiana to see for myself exactly what your conditions are and to discuss the situation with as many of you as possible, personally, at your county seats, I send you this letter now that you may understand exactly how I feel about your extraordinarily difficult, bitter, and trying situation. I want you to know that my Administration has been considering your problems from all possible angles, and that it has already put into motion various relief measures of which you have heard. Their good effect you should begin to feel almost immediately. I deeply regret that I could not see eye to eye with the five Governors who recently called upon me with the request that the government fix prices for all foodstuffs. That may seem to some like a simple and easy way out of the situation. It is nothing of the kind. It would be extraordinarily difficult if not impossible. It would further disrupt the ordinary processes of trade by putting the farmers' business upon an entirely arbitrary basis, and even that would not work unless every one of you came into the scheme. Do you believe that that would be possible?

One important thing I am going to do, however, without loss of time. I am calling Congress in special session on December 16 to declare a nation-wide moratorium on all farm mortgages for the period of one year. That will enormously restore your confidence and courage, I am sure. It means that for that breathing spell you will not have to pay interest, and that your homes will not be foreclosed. That this action will jeopardize many institutions which are dependent upon farm-mortgage interest for their support, I cannot deny. We shall have to take care of these so far as is possible through an emergency appropriation from Congress, or the existing funds of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. But this immediate nation-wide relief you are thoroughly entitled to.

Next let me make an honest confession. When we instituted the NRA, I told the country that I was not certain about the working of some phases of it, but that I would be the first to lead in retracing our steps if necessary. I now see I have made a great mistake in not giving as much time and effort to the restoration of our foreign trade as I have to other phases of our recovery program. I am going to retrace my steps now, or rather I am going to set them in this hardly tried path. Secretary Hull has valiantly been trying to bring about reciprocal tariff agreements with various countries, but he finds that the negotiations for commercial agreements with Argentina, Brazil, and various other countries have not got ahead for the reason that we have no fixed commercial or tariff policies. Our tariffs have been the football of politics dictated by sectional interests, and too often purchased outright by the privileged beneficiaries of these duties. When Congress meets I shall personally go before it and demand an immediate lateral reduction of tariffs. I know that I shall be opposed, but if necessary I shall campaign over the radio and on the stump to make my fellow-countrymen realize that this is one of the most vital steps that could possibly be taken to restore not only the prosperity of the farmer and of our country but of the whole world. Every nation is now surrounded by high tariffs, constantly changing, not only because they are constantly raised and lowered, but because they are daily affected by the changing values of the existing currencies of the world, so that nowhere can a merchant feel certain of the medium of exchange of his own country or of that with which he seeks to do business. This gravely hinders the recovery of the whole world.

You have been told in the past—I have myself sinned in that direction—that you should be brought into the charmed tariff circle, that additional tariffs should be put on for you and that others should be raised. I see that I have been wrong, and that what you need most of all now is not more tariffs, but fewer; that the cost of everything you buy—your clothing, your tableware, your shirts, your farm machinery, and all the rest—has been raised by the tariffs. I am going to lower them and reduce your costs, and that, I believe, will work quicker benefits for you than anything I could do in the way of stabilizing prices by government price-fixing. If Congress acts promptly, we shall see a great increase in our import and export trade during the year of your moratorium. For, believe me, we cannot sell our surpluses above our own needs to other nations which need them so badly unless we ourselves buy from them. There is no other way of carrying on international trade.

One final word. Bad, almost terrifying, as your situation is, remember that violence will get you nowhere. You have the right to refuse to sell if you please, but when you try by force to keep others from selling and to prevent the children of our cities and their parents from getting food, you are taking an unsocial step which it is my sworn duty to resist if I have to call out every regular soldier and every national guardsman in the country. Let me warn you, too, against listening to the advice of those who think that inflation is the road to success. That would spell ruin for us all, and *I shall never yield* to the pressure for it. I shall cite examples of what has happened when inflation has been resorted to here and abroad, when we meet personally next week.

Your servant and friend,
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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This letter is respectfully submitted to the President of the United States by his friend,

Oswald Garrison Villard

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# The Burning of the German Reichstag

By ARTHUR GARFIELD HAYS

ON January 30, 1933, after the fall of the Schleicher Government, Adolf Hitler, leader of the National Socialist Party (Nazis), became Chancellor of Germany. The German National Party controlled the government, the Reichswehr, and the offices of greatest economic importance.

On February 24 a search of the Karl Liebknecht House, Communist headquarters in Berlin, by a newly appointed police commissioner, Von Levetzow, a National Socialist, "revealed" incriminating documents found in "newly discovered cellars and catacombs under the premises," and this in spite of the fact that former Commissioner Melcher had searched these headquarters on various occasions without result. These documents—never made public—are said to show that the Communists threatened an immediate revolution, the signal for which was to be the burning of the German Reichstag. Strangely enough, no extra guard was placed at the building.

At about 9:10 p.m. on February 27 a fire broke out in the Reichstag, seriously damaging the building, chiefly through the complete gutting of the Plenary Session Chamber. Some 1,500 men were immediately arrested in Berlin alone, including the chief members of the Communist and the Social Democratic parties. Many of the arrests were made by the S. A.—Brown Shirt troopers—under the direction of Count Helldorf. When asked in court how he was able immediately to attribute the fire to the Communists and the Social Democrats, who were at first likewise charged, Helldorf's answer was: "I knew the fire to be the work of law-breakers. These people, enemies of the government, are law-breakers. Therefore I knew they were responsible for the fire."

On March 6 the German elections were held. The Communist Party was outlawed. As a result the Nazis, alone and without association with the National Party, had a majority in the Reichstag. It was thus apparent that regardless of who set fire to the Reichstag the Nazis were the beneficiaries.

Government communiques stated that Marinus van der Lubbe, who was found in the Reichstag after the fire, bore a Dutch passport and a Communist membership card; that Ernst Torgler, leader of the Communist fraction in the Reichstag, had left the building after the fire had broken out; that it must have taken at least ten men to have placed the incendiary material, and that at least seven were engaged in the arson. Torgler was not immediately apprehended. Hearing that his name was mentioned in connection with the fire, he went to the police the next day to demand an explanation. He was taken into custody. A few weeks later three Bulgarians, dining together in one of the Bargernhof restaurants, were noted as suspicious characters. They were arrested and immediately charged with complicity in the fire.

The interest of the world became centered in the case. It was taken for granted that the prisoners would not receive a fair trial. Many witnesses for the defense were political refugees in foreign countries. It seemed impossible to obtain legal representation for the defendants. Foreign lawyers were denied them. A commission of inquiry was set up in London comprised of the following: D. N. Pritt, K. C., of England (who acted as chairman), Madame Dr. Bakker-Nort of Holland, Gaston Bergery of France, George Branting of Sweden, Vald Hvidt of Denmark, Moro-Giafferi of France, Pierre Vermeylen of Belgium, and myself. There has been criticism that any commission should have the presumption to inquire in advance into the facts of a law case in a foreign country. Naturally, we had no authority or power. We could not subpoena witnesses; there was no opportunity for cross-examination by lawyers prepared to present a special point of view. Some of us felt, however, that the procedure set rather a valuable precedent. None of the members of the commission were either Communists or Nazis; all were lawyers. None had any reason to consider the case from any but an objective point of view. There was a vast body of evidence obtainable from German refugees which would not be available to a German court. We did not presume to come to any final conclusion but merely to base our findings on evidence that was submitted to us.

As a matter of fact that evidence had considerable probative force. Witnesses appeared not only from the Communist Party but from the Social Democratic Party—opponents of the Communists. They were able to testify as to the guarding of the Reichstag, the means of obtaining ingress and egress to the building, and general political conditions in Germany. A subcommittee took evidence in Holland in order to get all data available concerning Van der Lubbe. In fact, as against the evidence of sixteen witnesses who appeared before the subcommittee, the German court later received the evidence of a police commissioner, Heisig, who merely reported the result of his investigations in Holland.

We had evidence of Torgler's activities both on the day of the fire and prior thereto. One of the witnesses, Koenen, a Communist deputy, who had left the Reichstag with Torgler on the night of the fire, testified that he, Torgler, and the woman secretary of the Communist Party left the building at about 8:25, walking at a slow pace because the secretary had inflammation in the veins of her leg. This contrasted with the official statement that Torgler had hurried from the premises after the outbreak of the fire. We had evidence from Torgler's lawyer to the effect that he had gone with Torgler to the police, whereas the official press statements intimated that Torgler had tried to flee. Torgler's son testified to the normal life at home and that his father had made no preparations to escape. Another Communist deputy, Kuhne, testified that Torgler had spent the night with him. He gave evidence as to the vain searches at the Karl Liebknecht House until the occasion of February 24, when the lucky find of incriminating documents was made.

Evidence was submitted as to Dimitrov's alibi. It was proved conclusively that Dimitrov was in Munich for some days prior to and throughout the day of the fire. There was evidence that Tanev arrived in Berlin from Moscow just three days before the fire and that both he and Popov, close friends of Dimitrov, had remained with Dimitrov in Berlin

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until March 9, when they all were arrested on suspicion.

Evidence was submitted from the official reports to the effect that a vast amount of inflammable material was found in the Reichstag. More than one witness testified that during the week prior to the fire there was general talk of some provocative act which would give an excuse for the arrest of Communists.

For five days, from morning till night, in public sessions and in private hearings, from witnesses whose names were revealed and from others whom we were obliged to protect by keeping their names secret, from refugees living outside of Germany and from some who came incognito from Germany, we obtained facts which laid the foundation for certain tentative conclusions. It was clear that Van der Lubbe, who had set the fire, was not a member of the Communist Party; that the Communist Party was in no way involved; and that Torgler, Dimitrov, Popov, and Tanev were innocent.

The next question was whether Van der Lubbe could have committed the crime alone, and we concluded that this was impossible. In view of the guarding of the Reichstag, the difficulty of obtaining entrance, and the difficulty of escape, we concluded that it was likely that an underground tunnel between the Reichstag building and the house of President Göring was the means of ingress and egress. This led to the further conclusion that there was grave reason to suspect that the Reichstag was set on fire by or on behalf of "leading personalities of the National Socialist Party."

Following the report of the commission, which was made public on the night of September 20, I went to Leipzig to attend the trial. In August I had visited there and had had a talk with Dr. Paul Teichert, who had been appointed attorney for the three Bulgarians. I had a power of attorney from the defendants. I had asked Teichert if it would be possible for me to join him as counsel for the defense, whether he would consult with me, whether I might see the prisoners, whether the court would accept evidence taken outside of Germany, whether I would be permitted to see the official indictment which contained the statements of all witnesses against the defendants. I finally requested, if nothing else could be arranged, that I be permitted to attend the trial. Teichert seemed interested in little else than my passport, so I petitioned the court along the above lines. Permission was given for my attendance at the trial.

In Leipzig I found other foreign lawyers interested in the defense—Grigorov and Detchev of Bulgaria, Villard of France, and Leo Gallagher of Los Angeles. During the course of the trial other foreign lawyers appeared, but they left after a day or two. And after some weeks Leo Gallagher was barred from court and Grigorov, Detchev, and Villard were arrested, held in jail, and finally expelled from Germany. The cause was a rather tactless letter they wrote to the court suggesting that the defendants had been framed by the police department.

In the proceedings I was less than a lawyer, but more than an observer. On occasion Communists, who were fearful of the defense lawyers, would bring evidence to me. I was able to suggest certain lines of inquiry and examination. There were questions of getting evidence outside of Germany. There were protests to be made to the court as well as to the prosecution in connection with matters that arose in the course of the trial. Many incidents seemed curious to me, but that may have been because of my lack of knowledge of German legal procedure. Hearsay evidence is admitted; self-serving declarations are accepted; cross-examination, as we know it, hardly exists. Witnesses are examined by the judge, who has before him the testimony taken by the court of investigation, and this in itself puts a judge in the position of an inquisitor.

The court was always solicitous to protect the witnesses from criticism and it was absolutely insistent that the court and police officials, who had made the preliminary investigation, should not be insulted by reflections upon their impartiality in handling the case. Dimitrov was often barred from the court as punishment for his irrepressible insistence on making statements or asking questions which the court barred. The court was anxious to give the impression that it handled the case objectively. Predispositions and prejudices can be learned only from the verdict. I left before the "political" phase of the trial, when Göring and Goebbels, ostensibly called to answer the charges that they were implicated, seem to have turned the court into a public Nazi forum and to have brazenly demanded the heads of the defendants.

Van der Lubbe was the first witness to be called before the bench. He had to be lifted from his chair. He was a pathetic, abject figure, absolutely passive and as expressionless as a dumb ox. He would sit with his head almost resting on his knees. During the day he would grow greener and paler and at times I did not think he would last the night. He seemed utterly oblivious to what was going on. A psychiatrist testified that Van der Lubbe was sane, but his testimony that Van der Lubbe was employing communistic tactics seemed to discredit his medical opinion.

Dimitrov was next called before the judges. From the beginning he has been the stormy petrel of the case. The man is not only brave but reckless. Whenever during the course of the trial he got to his feet, he would by the force of his personality place the court, the German audience, and the Nazis on the defensive. At the first question of the court Dimitrov insisted upon making a statement. The court said it was not the time. Dimitrov answered that he had been waiting for months to declare his innocence. The court tried to stop him, but Dimitrov, apparently smarting under a sense of injustice, shouted: "You must excuse me if I am not calm. For five months, day and night, I was kept in chains! The whole case has been framed! I am an accidental defendant. I am an innocent man!" Dimitrov insisted upon stating then and there that he had not been in Berlin within days of the fire; that he had never met Torgler or Van der Lubbe; that all his activities in Germany had been in behalf of the Bulgarian Communist Party. The court asked if he had been traveling under a false passport and had failed to report to the police, to which Dimitrov answered, "Naturally." The court asked if he had been involved in the bombing of the Sofia cathedral. Dimitrov answered that he had left Bulgaria years before that time. The court said: "You were sentenced to death in connection with that affair." Dimitrov replied that he had read that in various foreign papers but that it did not interest him, and added, "This was a provocative act in order to put the blame on the Communists"; and then loudly and with great emphasis, "Those things sometimes happen in Germany." So Dimitrov began, and throughout he showed the same moral force and courage. Nothing, not even exclusion from the

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court, could stop him. On his next appearance he was as fiery as ever. While from the point of view of the defense it would have been helpful to prove that Van der Lubbe committed the crime alone, Dimitrov insisted that he must have had accomplices, and when the experts so testified, Dimitrov rose from his chair between two police officers and shouted: "That is what I say! We now have Faust; who is the Mephistopheles?"

Torgler, the only German defendant, contrasted very neatly with Dimitrov. He is calm, quiet, and persuasive. He likewise insisted on starting his story by declaring his innocence. He had learned socialism from his mother, had always been a Socialist, had served in the war, was wounded and gassed. On his return he went back to the tailor shop where he had worked for years and later was sent to the Reichstag.

Popov, another of the Bulgarians, is distinctly of a student type. He is composed and restrained, but persuasively definite. On the night of the fire he and Tanev had had dinner and had then gone to a motion-picture theater. He remembered the occasion because he had returned to the theater for his gloves which he had left behind. It was pointed out to him that on his arrest he had not given the same explanation of his movements, to which he replied: "That does not surprise me. It is not strange that I did not remember at first. The day was like any other day to me."

Tanev, the third of the Bulgarians, is a shoemaker, quiet and dignified in his demeanor but with neither the intelligence of Popov nor the force and vigor of Dimitrov. He had reached Berlin just three days before the fire. He was likewise an exile from Bulgaria but had come to Berlin in the expectation of a political amnesty in his own country.

Weeks passed before any evidence appeared which would even tend to connect the defendants, other than Van der Lubbe, with the fire. Van der Lubbe stated that he had climbed through a window of the Reichstag with "coal and cinder" fire materials; that he had found himself in the restaurant; that he had set some fires there; that having run out of "coal and cinder" he had used his shirt as a torch; he had burned curtains, then a tablecloth he had found in a chest, then towels he had found on a washstand. He must have rushed through the building like a crazy man—from the restaurant to the main hall, back to the restaurant, then to the basement, through the kitchens, to the washroom, then upstairs again to the Plenary Hall, where finally the big fire developed. Finally he was caught, sweaty, begrimed, dirty, coatless, and shirtless, but indifferent. Steadfastly he insisted that he had no accomplices.

In court his answers were mostly monosyllabic, often contradictory. The evidence was taken through reading his statements in the earlier interrogations. After weeks of this sort of thing one began to think that it was true that he had done the act alone, particularly since he had tried to set three fires the preceding Saturday night, one of them in a welfare office against which he had a personal grievance. Experts later testified that more than one must have been concerned in the act. The official reports had referred to a large number of persons and to a vast quantity of inflammable material. The evidence, however, showed that there was very little, if any, inflammable material in the Reichstag, although two witnesses said they saw a torch and that there was a streak of gasoline which appeared on the carpet at one place. Finally one of the experts testified that the fire must have been set through the use of some self-inflammatory material. In his opinion Van der Lubbe was a decoy and had had nothing whatever to do with the main fire in the Plenary Hall.

Evidence was introduced to show the careful guarding of the Reichstag. While apparently this was intended to lead to the conclusion that the Nazis were not concerned in the fire, yet it likewise exculpated the defendants. Considerable testimony was given concerning the underground passage between the Reichstag and the palace of Minister Göring, and Nazi witnesses were called to deny their own complicity. All of this was done to disprove allegations made to the contrary in the "Brown Book" and to answer the tentative conclusions of the London commission. The court was not only trying the defendants but permitting the Nazis to defend themselves from the attacks made upon them.

After four weeks came the only evidence which would at all connect the defendants other than Van der Lubbe with the fire. In an Anglo-Saxon court this would have been presented within a few days of the beginning of the trial. There were alleged identifications, exclusively by Nazis, who claimed to have seen Torgler with Van der Lubbe and with Popov. The statements of these witnesses are self-contradictory and on their face preposterous. Two of them claimed to have seen Van der Lubbe with Torgler in the Reichstag on the afternoon of the fire. Others claimed to have seen Popov with Torgler, and witnesses fixed the time of their observations so that Popov must have spent most of the afternoon in the Reichstag. If Torgler contemplated a serious crime, it seems strange that he should have so exhibited his associates in a public corridor and so openly provided evidence. He might as well have called in the movies! Moreover, the witnesses gave different descriptions of Popov's clothing and could not describe Van der Lubbe's clothes at all, although his ragged and ill-fitting garments were, according to other witnesses, the significant features that attracted attention. The witnesses identified Van der Lubbe by his face and posture, which they observed at the police station, but they did not remember his clothes! The explanation may well be that these were destroyed in the fire and they had thus had no opportunity to refresh their recollection. Nor has anyone explained how a man of Van der Lubbe's appearance could have entered the Reichstag during the day, unobserved by guards and employees, and why, if he was working inside, he should have left and entered from the outside.

A witness claimed to have seen Popov running from a door in the Reichstag which the evidence showed was locked. This witness was at first unable to describe Popov or his clothes to the police. Later, after seeing Popov, he identified the man but described garments which Popov did not possess and which were so different from those seen by others earlier in the day that one would be obliged to conclude that Popov made kaleidoscopic changes from a large wardrobe.

Two other witnesses testified to the surprising fact that Torgler, a German deputy, carried brief cases on the day of the fire and from this would have the court conclude that he was carrying fire materials or chemicals.

A witness testified that on the day of the fire or within a few days thereof he observed Van der Lubbe in front of the Communist quarters in the Reichstag carrying a box on his shoulders, and that Tanev was "keeping him company." The difference in size attracted the attention of the witness—

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and Tanev did not have "German eyes." This witness stated that he had seen Tanev go to the Communist rooms on many occasions. Apparently he did not know that Tanev had arrived in Berlin just three days before the fire.

Another witness claimed to have seen Dimitrov with Van der Lubbe. Dimitrov wanted to know if this witness had agreed to fit his evidence with the one who on another occasion claimed to have seen Tanev with Van der Lubbe. The answer of the witness was, "I am a German officer." Dimitrov insisted that that did not interest him, but the court refused to permit further questions.

All of this alleged evidence of identification is too preposterous to be seriously considered. It is of the same character as the testimony of one witness who regarded it as a suspicious circumstance that Koenen, a Communist deputy, had arrived at the Reichstag on the day of the fire with his coat collar turned up—this was in winter—and who saw Dimitrov, who concededly was in Munich on February 27, the day of the fire, leave the Reichstag on that afternoon with two other persons and heard Dimitrov mutter: "The Reichstag will blow up in twenty minutes."

Probably the question of Van der Lubbe's accomplices will always remain a mystery. The inference is inescapable that others were concerned with him. But there is no direct evidence of the fact, or of the persons. It is almost inconceivable that the accomplices can have been Communists. Certainly they cannot have been the Communists charged with the crime. It is clear that none of the Communists had known Van der Lubbe, nor had the Bulgarians known Torgler. Although the Communists favored revolutionary mass action, they had always been opposed to terroristic acts. Nor had the Communists anything to gain from the fire. In fact, it was almost certain to result in the destruction of their party—and it did. The suggestion that the fire was intended as a signal for revolution becomes ludicrous in view of the evidence, wrung from the Nazis, that there was no sign of disorder on the night in question.

As against the Nazis, the following is to be considered: Not only was the fire distinctly to their benefit but they immediately took advantage of it. If, as they claimed, they found documents in the Communist Karl Liebknecht House which indicated that the Communists planned a revolution which was to start with the burning of the Reichstag, why then did they not guard the building? There was little doubt that at the time of the fire there was considerable talk of a possible provocative act. Finally, the Nazis would certainly have had the only opportunity for ingress and egress through the underground passage.

On the evidence as it at present exists, it would be monstrous for the court to hold that the four Communist defendants were guilty of complicity in the burning of the Reichstag. It must be remembered, however, that the crime charged is high treason, and it may be that, even if the defendants are not connected with the arson, they will be found guilty because they are regarded as dangerous to the state. There is talk of "intellectual responsibility" for the fire. When a court wishes to convict a defendant, it needs only an excuse. The verdict will answer the question of the world as to whether a civilized institution like a court of justice still exists in Nazi Germany.

# The Farmers in Revolt

By B. H. HIBBARD

*Madison, Wisconsin, November 9*

"WHAT would the city people do if we stopped sending them food?" is a question which has been heard not infrequently in farm gatherings during the past dozen years. Until very recently no one took these remarks seriously. Farmers have not been on a strike, in any large sense, in centuries. True enough, they have developed a remarkable movement through such organizations as the Grange, the Alliance, and the Farmers' Union. These have made demands, have controlled legislatures, and have frightened Congress, but not until 1932 did they go so far as to lay siege to the cities, the centers of wealth and population, and demand a surrender on peril of starvation. In many States now, variously reported as from six to sixteen, the farmers are in a fighting mood. Their leaders in one breath counsel moderation and "peaceful picketing." In another breath they threaten vigorous measures. There is not so often the open declaration of militant programs to be carried out with the exercise of the required force, as there is the exercise of force without a declaration of intent to kill or destroy. In other words, the situation is in the mob stage, and results cannot be predicted or controlled.

The rank and file are not disciplined. Two days after the leaders issue a proclamation to the effect that only orderly and peaceful means will be used, it is reported that army rifles have been seized, ammunition stolen, and dynamite appropriated. Some of the dynamite, with cap and fuse, is found tied to a stock car. Dairy plants are shattered by bombs. A woman with a six-shooter holds a mob of pickets at bay until officers arrive and convoy a load of milk to market. Trains have been stopped and live stock turned loose in the streets; railroad bridges have been burned, trucks overturned. The attempt to keep the struggle on the plane of moral suasion has been, and can be, only partially successful. Blood is up. Patience is at low ebb.

Looking back over the years, we see that the farmer has been docile. He has been a conformist. Iowa was always safe for the dominant party, and Arkansas was equally safe for the minority party during three-quarters of a century. North Dakota wasn't quite so safe, but it usually happened that she voted right, and besides, her electoral-college strength is negligible. Except when his conformity was shaken by erratic rainfall with its attendant crop failures, the farmer has caused little worry to the party usually in power. It has always been an easy matter to refer in party platforms to the prosperity of our farmer class, and especially since 1890 to offer more import-tariff protection on export products. These promises were put into vigorous language by Mr. Hoover in 1928 when he declared that the tariff "is and must remain the chief cornerstone of farm relief." Earlier, in a

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speech before a farmer gathering, Mr. Coolidge had declared that the farmer had every reason to be gratified because substantially everything he produced was amply protected, while the goods he bought were on the free list.

The New Deal Administration has taken the farmer seriously. The unrest had started before the election, and the incoming Congress and President were impressed with the necessity of keeping the promises made to agriculture during the campaign. However, even the genial, optimistic occupant of the White House, together with his advisers, was not too anxious to undertake the twelve labors of Hercules all at once. It is reported, and moreover believed, that the Administration would have much preferred trying out the price-raising allotment plan in connection with wheat and cotton, leaving the corn-hog and dairy management for later efforts. But no. Too many people were unwilling to be put off. They too had voted for prosperity to come through government, and come it must.

The President acted with unprecedented speed. Before a day, a business day, had passed, the banks were taken in hand to save them from being wrecked by their creditors. Congress was convened at once. The Agricultural Adjustment Act was passed in May. By the same document the federal refinancing of farm mortgages was provided for. Powers such as Congress had never, at least in time of peace, turned over to another branch of government were put into the President's hands. He might inflate the currency, while the Congressmen were at home! Prices had to rise; they have to rise; but in the minds of the striking farmers the only increases of importance have been those pertaining to their purchases, not their sales. According to the most reliable index, the dairy farmer gained a bit in the way of income in July. This was an item in the pre-inflation inflation. This gave him a seventy-one-cent dollar. Four months later he finds his dairy feeds distinctly up in price, while the products he sells have either fallen to lower levels or at best made less than the usual seasonal gains.

Since last spring the farmer has had time to think things over. He realizes that he needs more income now than twenty years ago. He is much more heavily in debt; hence more must go into interest payment, even without reducing the principal. His taxes are still double the figure of those earlier years. What is more, he has been living on a higher plane: driving a car, in some instances living in a house with running water and a furnace. And speaking of running water, a farmer asked a plumber a few days ago for a price on a repair item, some $15. Said the plumber: "Sorry you didn't think of that a few weeks ago. On account of the NRA these items have doubled in price." Higher prices will start business up again, you know. But not in this case. The farmer doesn't buy. He curses. No, the farmer does not want pre-war prices. He wants cost of production. This may be a vague concept in the mind of the economist but to the farmer who produces at a loss it is vivid.

It appears that the farmer is striking against the consumer. More literally, he is striking against the city. Yet this is only in appearance. The farmer knows that the consumers as a class are poor; that most of them cannot pay much more than they are now paying. However, he sees red when he reads of the prosperity of the milk distributors. He can't understand why the distributors' margin should be wider now than during the period of high prices, say from 1917 to 1920. Are wages not lower? Are not building costs down? But at any rate the middleman's margin is up, and the farmer is the goat. He sells milk at three to five cents a quart for city trade, and a day later the consumers pay nine to twelve cents for it.

The farmer is not striking against the consumer intentionally. He is striking against the vague commercial system which gives the milk distributors the basis of dividends, the packers the basis of prosperity, and the aristocrats of the labor world a dollar or two an hour. As one farmer put it: "How can I ever buy a bathtub when I earn five cents an hour and the manufacturers and plumbers twenty to forty times as much?" In general, the strike is not against the consumer, not even against the middleman. In fact, the strike isn't a strike. It is a political demonstration. The farmer blames the government, and not without reason, for the plight he is in. Therefore, he looks to the government as the one power able to give aid commensurate with the needs of the occasion. His faith in the Brain Trust is not great. Just why an economist—and the farmer does not rate trained economists as high as he rates many of the self-made, self-styled economists—why an economist who has had little touch with agriculture at any time should all at once spring into prominence as a main, or the main, adviser to the President on all agricultural matters, he cannot understand. He can understand the language of the men who now presume to know the way out of the valley of despair in which farmers have been groping for years. These leaders are vocal, vituperative, vitriolic. It is idle to question their sincerity. They are men of action. They use, or coin, the catch-phrases of the moment. They shout to the crowd to come on. They tell their followers that no great cause was ever won by obeying the Constitution or conforming to established laws. Their demands are concrete and comprehensive. They want cost of production for the future, immunity from loss of property for debts already contracted and due. They want farm loans on long time at something like 1½ per cent interest. A mere mention of the "Frazier bill" will bring prolonged applause. The farmer believes that since the government has been able in the past to borrow much money at 2 or 3 per cent, it may as well use this credit, even at a small loss, to help redeem the farms and homes now doomed to foreclosure. The effort and accomplishments of the Farm Credit Administration do not satisfy the needs of those deep in debt. The "normal value" of farms as set by the appraisers is below the figure needed to save all too many debtor farmers.

The wheat, cotton, and tobacco farmers are quiet, awaiting or already in receipt of the checks in payment for abstinence. But when it is remembered that a quarter of the farm income for the whole country comes from the dairy, and that nearly another quarter comes from other live stock and its products, it is easy to see that the farm program is far from complete while the dairy problems are not in hand and the hog program is viewed as doubtful.

The government is very properly nervous, and is making desperate efforts to mollify, if not to satisfy, the turbulent Middle West. Offering to lend fifty cents on corn in the crib looks like fixing a fifty-cent price on corn—five times the figure of a year ago. Raising the price of milk to the consumer in certain big cities by a cent a quart and ordering an increase of the full amount to the farmer will deter him from striking in the vicinity of such cities unless indeed there

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should arise a protest from the consumer, a consummation not entire impossible. But it is the farmer, not the consumer, we are now considering. The farmer refuses to understand why he should be asked to pay—for the most part he isn't buying—$196 for a grain binder such as he bought in 1917 for $120, even though the same binder has been reduced 15 per cent within a few years. He can't see why the price of shoes should have increased 10 or 20 per cent within three months when hides are so cheap that he can't take them off dead animals at five cents an hour and make anything doing it. He can't understand why flour has more than doubled in value recently. He does understand clearly that while a short potato crop last year sold at a low price, a shorter crop this year brings more than twice as much money. Thus he will, for the first time in history, agree to a program of reduction of output when it is presented to him in concrete form. He will make trouble, much more than has been made yet, unless the plans of the government respecting some of our main agricultural products assume more definite and tangible shape than they have yet assumed. The majority of the farmers of the Middle West are not only not striking; they do not want to strike. They feel deeply, however, that the NRA is not, as General Johnson asserts, the Siamese twin to the AAA. To the farmer the NRA is the antidote for the AAA. Probably the farmers, both strikers and non-strikers, see, as do many others, the folly of our attempt to arrive at prosperity through destruction. We need some positive philosophy in place of our present faith in not doing and in undoing. We need some genius to show us how to get some of our surpluses to the places of dearth. That would start the round of operations again better than for all of us to strive to get back to empty bins and empty shelves, to match the empty stomachs and lives of our millions of unemployed. The farmers have too much milk, the consumers too little.

# Now That Election Is Over

By JOSEPH McGOLDRICK

THE victory in New York City is not the old-fashioned reform triumph. The new Fusion is not a silk-stocking, black-broadcloth affair. The Chamber of Commerce, which had been active in the councils of all earlier Fusion movements, was silent and most of its members supported the McKee ticket. So also did Wall Street. It is not a secret that Harvey Gibson took the lead in bringing Mr. McKee into the picture—although Joe did not make up his mind until the persuasions of Bosses Flynn and Farley were added. Although the ghost of Dr. Parkhurst was abroad in the campaign, the evangelical note was a distinctly minor one. Even the Good Government group was secondary in importance to socially minded liberals in Candidate La Guardia's counsels. And the candidate himself was, of course, not a "goo-goo" but a resourceful, two-fisted champion of something more than dollars-and-cents honesty and decorum in government.

The victory that has been won is not, of course, complete. It is unfortunate that the District Attorney's office of Manhattan remains in Tammany hands, although the District Attorney elect is a man of honesty and character. To carry out the program against racketeering it would be desirable to have more cooperation between the police and the District Attorney's office, and a more zealous prosecutor would have been a great asset to the new government. The loss of all the county places is not an irreparable loss because it may stimulate the demand for reorganization of county government, which has long been a hog-wallow of politics. In fact, the Republican State legislature may have less difficulty in being convinced of this than it would have been if there had been several Republicans newly elected to county offices.

The failure to capture the Board of Aldermen is a more serious handicap. It is true that for twenty years this body has ignored the powers which it possesses, but no one can doubt that they will now be resurrected to plague the Fusion government. Fortunately these powers are somewhat limited, but the members would be able to override the Mayor's veto on cuts which they might make in the budget. They have nothing to do with bus franchises, subway problems, or city planning. They would naturally resist any effort to abolish themselves, and to do this it may be necessary to secure from the State legislature permission to have a movement for a new charter initiated by petition. This the State legislature can do by amending the home-rule law. Such an amendment could be passed by majority vote and, in fact, a bill for this purpose passed the Assembly in the closing hours of last spring's session, only to fail by a single vote in the State Senate. There is real hope of getting such a bill early in the next legislative session. Even if the bill requires 35,000 signatures, the very effort to get them would be of immense propaganda value. Amendment of the charter directly by the legislature will be virtually impossible since it would require a two-thirds' vote. Amendment by local law would require the consent of the Board of Aldermen. The reorganization of the county government would be more difficult, for it would require a constitutional amendment to be passed by a two-thirds' vote at two legislative sessions.

The local and the State legislatures will test the reality of the conflict within Democratic ranks. It will be interesting to see whether those assemblymen and aldermen who ran on both the O'Brien and McKee tickets will fall in line with the Democratic regulars. Although the public was quite right in discounting the McKee movement as a movement to drive out bossism, the residue of that hypocritical effort may be a protracted struggle within the new New York City organization. The Manhattan Tammany leaders will not readily yield to the Flynn-Farley yoke. They may be forced to if Flynn and Farley can work out an alliance with Brooklyn. It is likely to be a bitter struggle and may operate to divide the opposition to the LaGuardia administration.

More immediate in importance than charter revision will be the question of finances. New York City's affairs have been badly managed for sixteen years and particularly so in the last three. The city administration has refused to face the need for a balanced city budget. In fact, much that it has done to reduce the budget has operated to throw it fur-

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ther out of balance, particularly such specious economies as the reduction of sinking-fund appropriations on the theory of sinking-fund surpluses. As a result of this bungling the city has now outstanding almost $500,000,000 in short-term obligations. Of this $200,000,000 is in corporate-stock notes awaiting refunding. The notes bear interest at 6 per cent (the maximum the city may pay) and are selling below par. Another $200,000,000 of short-term indebtedness represents revenue bills issued against delinquent taxes. These are to be cared for through the reserve requirements worked out in the agreement with the banks. During the campaign Mayor O'Brien and his supporters boasted that the city's financial problem was solved. The agreement with the bankers subsequently written into statute by the extraordinary session of the legislature requires that the city tax levy be not increased and that the city budget provide from the tax levy a $25,000,000 reserve against tax delinquency. The obvious purpose was to require a $25,000,000 reduction in the budget. This has yet to be undertaken. The Board of Aldermen have, under the charter, until November 30 to accomplish this reduction. If they fail, the banks may balk at the refinancing which the city will require on December 11.

The new Fusion government is properly reluctant to assume any responsibility for this budget reduction. In the first place, Tammany has brought about the trouble and should take the onus of it, and, secondly, the new Fusion officers have no legal status in relation to the budget or the city's finances until January 1. On the other hand, the budget is being made by Tammany for the government that will take office on January 1 and that government cannot be wholly indifferent to the manner in which the budget is prepared. Tammany is in a position to wield the ax of economy so as to spare its own friends and make difficulties aplenty for the new regime.

To these problems we should add the no less difficult problem of patronage. Candidate LaGuardia promised that he would conduct his administration "out of politics." But there are over 2,000 non-civil-service jobs in the city departments. The holders of these are almost to a man political, and many of them are outrageously unfit. The fact that their loyalties are for the Tammany organization which appointed them rather than for the city which pays them should alone warrant their speedy dismissal. They are of negative value to the service. Many of these places can and must be abolished. How, then, shall the others be filled? The "purists" of the Fusion movement would have them filled exclusively on the basis of merit. The "realists" and most Republicans would like to build up the organizations which fought for the Fusion victory. This implies reward for past contributions of service or money and the implied promise to continue those contributions. This might mean appointment on the exclusive basis of utility to the organization (the Tammany test), or it might mean the appointment to each place of the person in Fusion or Republican ranks best fitted to hold it, or it might mean that, other things being equal, service to Fusion should entitle the server to serve his city. The writer can neither promise nor predict which policy or blend of these policies will be followed. There is no question that many have flocked to the Fusion banner in the quest of jobs and in the assumption or hope that protestations of non-political appointment were not meant or would be evaded or forgotten. They will be disappointed and disgruntled if they are not given jobs. Can the organization hold together without patronage? Most experienced observers say no. Could a Fusion government be reelected without a patronage-cemented organization? Again they say no. Can good government, not merely the Chamber of Commerce or the Citizens' Union type of good government but socially motivated good government, be made attractive to the electorate of a machine-habituated city?

Fusion has expressly promised to abide by the bankers' agreement, and, in fact, will have no alternative since the legislature has made this mandatory. Although the political waste in the city budget is enormous, it should not be forgotten that a very large part of this is in the county government and the courts, which will be beyond the new Board of Estimate's control. Fortunately Fusion has an ample majority in the Board of Estimate, and it is even more fortunate in the high character, ability, and training of the men whom it has elected.

Fusion government is a difficult adventure. It begins in the association of many men and women of widely differing points of view, whose one common purpose is to drive out corrupt and colossally incompetent government. But the persons who form a Fusion differ greatly in their interests and their emphases. It is twenty years since a Fusion government was elected in New York City, but that is not so long a period as to prevent many of those who labored in the present movement from remembering and trying to profit by the lessons of the past.

# The Soviet Revolution Goes On

By LOUIS FISCHER

IN July, six months after the National Socialists came to power in Germany, Adolf Hitler declared that "the revolution is at an end." Sixteen years after the Bolshevik upheaval, however, the revolution not only is not ended, but continues to uncover new sources of energy, enthusiasm, and economic success. The tempo of Soviet events is as rapid and dynamic as ever, and progress is undeniable. Moscow's domestic policy is more radical now than at any time between 1917 and 1929. The Socialist features of the regime strike deeper root and cover wider areas as each year passes. There is no desire to turn back toward anything resembling capitalism, and conditions in the capitalist world are enough to kill any suspicion in a Bolshevik's mind that it would be wise to do so. After sixteen years the revolution goes marching on, head high, confident of ultimate triumph, registering new victories every day. No mystic spirit explains this striking phenomenon. The Communists know consciously, many Soviet citizens know consciously, and millions of others sense subconsciously that a new world is being created which will make their life better and happier. They

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see the beginnings. They begin to feel the improvement. They cannot doubt that every official effort, however misguided, however poorly executed, however costly, is nevertheless conceived with a view to the advantage of the masses. This makes them loyal to the state, patient of error, and optimistic, and such an attitude in turn reinforces the morale of the party, places at its disposal fresh human reserves, and gives it a mandate to push the process of social reconstruction. Those Americans who are stirred by the knowledge that Washington, at last, is trying to do something for them will understand how it is that 160,000,000 Soviet citizens have had the same kind of exhilaration, with much more justice perhaps, ever since large-scale industrialization and agrarian collectivization started in 1929. After sixteen years of revolution and five years of its second and more intense cycle, neither the *élan* of the revolution nor the faith in the revolution is exhausted.

Whereas the vitality of bolshevism does not diminish as time goes on, the Soviets are fortunately sloughing off many of their early freakish notions, which represented a queer mixture of misplaced radicalism and immaturity and were manifestations of—to translate an expressive Russian word—"childish leftism." Thus a collar and tie are no longer bourgeois—though a cane still is; a gramophone has ceased to be decadent; and the anathema has been lifted from jazz and fairy tales. A lot of silly "modernistic-communistic" schemes have been booted out of the educational system. Teachers have more authority, students must not torment their professors, and the brigade or group method whereby pupils studied and did laboratory experiments collectively and were therefore ignorant individually has been abolished. Simultaneously, entrance and graduation examinations as well as marks have been reintroduced, and the time a pupil may devote to political activities is now strictly limited. For years parental control was weakened by the implications of Soviet education; children learned to be self-reliant young anarchists who belonged to the street when they were not in school. Now a newspaper says critically: "Mama is studying how to run the government, but she doesn't know that one of the most important elements of the state is lying at home in the baby's crib." Parents are urged to exercise more authority over their offspring.

An equally sharp detour back to common sense is signalized by A. Soltz, who is as moderate in politics as he is rigid in sex matters. Soltz, a highly placed member of the all-important Central Control Committee, suggests that the sins of fathers should no longer be visited even upon the next generation. Soviet practice has always insisted on punishing young men and women of eighteen or twenty, real products of the revolution, for having been born into a family that was formerly kulak, mercantile, or otherwise capitalistic. Grown-up children have felt compelled to disown and denounce their bourgeois parents in the press or at meetings and even to change their surnames in the hope of escaping the odium of non-proletarian origin. Yet Soltz now declares that "nobody is to blame for his origin, and we do not choose our parents." This great truth was known before September 8 when Soltz's article appeared in the *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, but to his readers its enunciation must have been a startling proclamation of a new policy. Soltz urges that the youth of suppressed classes be admitted not only to factories but even to the universities if, as is likely, they sympathize with bolshevism. Origin is not everything, Soltz warns, and it is not enough to be a worker's son in order to get first place.

The "leftist" notions and policies have been abandoned because they failed to produce results, or because they produced harmful results, or because they were too silly to live on forever. The strengthening of Stalin's position and of the revolution generally, moreover, has stimulated a spirit of tolerance. And then, too, some of these "childish-radical" innovations—university study brigades, for instance—date back to the 1929-30 period in which many Bolsheviks, dizzy with the success of collectivization and industrialization, thought they could enter the Communist millennium by one scratch of the pen. That phase, with its penchant for radical forms and utopian equalization, is today a memory. Years must pass before all of life and economics can be put on a truly communistic basis.

How, if that is the case, can the present stage of the Bolshevik Revolution be characterized? Is it socialism, state socialism, socialistic communism, state capitalism, capitalistic socialism, or what? In agriculture, where people and technique are comparatively backward, some real communes exist, but nothing is heard any more of the urban industrial communes that sprang up in the brief communistic springtime of 1930. The city factory is owned and operated by the state. Transport is a government monopoly. Trade is an important state prerogative. Government control in the *kolhozi* is growing. The state's activities broaden.

The Soviet state exercises many of the functions which capitalists exercise in bourgeois countries, but since the ownership of the means of production is not vested in any individuals or any groups of individuals, since it is not vested in anybody and therefore is vested in everybody, in society, I think it would be correct to call the Soviet economic system state socialism in order to distinguish it from government ownership of telegraphs and railroads or government participation in banking and industry in capitalist lands, where such arrangements usually serve an economic order which is intrinsically and chiefly private-capitalistic. Moreover, when the state which controls all economic enterprises is itself not controlled by capitalists—for capitalists are totally without influence and fast disappearing in the U. S. S. R.—it is at least misleading to regard the Soviet system as state capitalism. Soviet state socialism, however, includes a slight trace of communism, a considerable if diminishing number of purely private producers, and village collectives which combine common ownership and common cultivation with certain private-property features.

A government which owns and operates a country's industries and transport facilities and owns or strictly controls its agriculture must be an omnipotent government, especially when the national economy is virile, progressive, and growing; and the Soviet Union's economy is all of these. The last year has witnessed truly remarkable industrial progress. The Cheliabinsk factory which manufactures sixty-horse-power caterpillar tractors has started production and is experiencing few if any of the "children's diseases" which plagued similar Soviet giants in the past. In the Ural Mountains region a chain of plants whose dimensions and modernity make even the American specialist gape is nearing completion. Literally every day the newspapers report the beginning of commercial production in newly constructed industrial units. During the next four months new turbines developing 570,000 kilo-

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watts will begin operating in district stations. The opening of a new railway spur several hundred kilometers long is a regular occurrence. Now that the White Sea-Baltic canal has been finished, more intensive activity has started on the canal which will bring the Volga River to Moscow. Neither the imagination nor the energy of the Bolsheviks, apparently, knows any normal bounds. And this is an off year, so to speak—a year between grandiose plans. In 1934 the second Five-Year Plan will probably begin astounding the world with the audacity of its conception. There can no longer be any doubt that within the fourth decade of this century the U. S. S. R. will make a serious bid to become the greatest Power on the face of the earth, comparable only with the United States.

Now that the devastating effects of last year's poor harvest are quickly being erased by an excellent crop, agrarian collectivization may be judged as an established institution standing by the side of Soviet industrialization as the second mighty pillar of the Russian economic system. Collectivization has made Stalin's place in world history a secure and large one. Where others wavered in times of strain, his hand held firm till the victorious end. It is to be noted not simply that the 1933 agricultural yield was good, but that it was good because of the collectives, because of Bolshevik policy, and despite psychological and physical handicaps. Lenin and Trotzky never dreamed that Russian agriculture could be revolutionized so quickly—and, incidentally, they might never have dared to revolutionize it at so tremendous an expense. The process is not yet complete. But its course is charted and the most threatening reefs are passed.

The economic functions of the Soviet state and the successes of its collectivization and industrialization program make it all-powerful. The tendency of the last two or three years toward executive decentralization—many trusts and state farms have been broken up—was not accompanied by any decentralization of authority. Stalin has said: "The attrition of the state will come not by weakening the government's power but by strengthening it to the very limit"; and he has certainly been doing so. The heavy hand of large and small government office-holders, therefore, weighs upon every phase and act of life, robbing people of initiative and instilling into them a fear of failure and of responsibility which persists even though arrests of engineers, technicians, and intellectuals generally, which were a daily feature in 1931, have now practically ceased. The end of that economic terror is a welcome development, but more than a negative change is required if the country is to be relieved of the bureaucratic octopus, with its red tape and pedantry. The horizon of a bureaucrat consists of a piece of official stationery and a rubber stamp. These make him a narrow-minded autocrat to whom obedience to a paragraph is infinitely more important than any human consideration. He does not want to do more than he must. His chief concern is to play safe and keep his job. The party's Central Committee seeks to cope with this situation by ordering frequent and detailed reforms in Odessa, Zlatoust, Stalino, and other places. But such tactics merely aggravate the difficulty, for the Kremlin should fix a general, inclusive policy, and then leave the local authorities some freedom of action instead of directing every tiny move of every distant provincial administrator. It is truly remarkable, and yet a fact, that such bureaucracy and excessive centralization cannot kill some state employees' zeal to achieve. The desire to please Moscow's farsighted eye, however, stimulates a race for paper results and for records that can be reported to the "center" which still continues, though it has been officially recognized as harmful and punishable. Moscow's insistence on plan-fulfilment come what may leads to reduced quality, longer hours for officials, and lower individual productivity. It diminishes respect for Soviet laws and regulations and seems to constitute a mandate to justify any means by reference to the good and glorious end.

The Bolsheviks, of course, have never apologized for compulsion. "Great problems in the lives of nations," Lenin wrote, "are solved only by force." And a much lesser Communist said to me recently: "You know the Russian. You can't do anything with him unless you hit him with an oaken club." Maybe. Maybe the Russians have to be forced to improve their own lot, especially since the way lies through sacrifices. There is an element of force in all education. But a good pedagogue succeeds by persuasion and kindness where the threat of punishment fails. The Soviet nation has learned enough lessons since the revolution and absorbed enough fresh culture to react favorably to a better political pedagogy. More democracy is inevitable. It is long overdue. And as to bureaucracy, which is the alternative to democracy, if it conforms to Stalin's formula about the state, it has been strengthened to such a limit that it already is a perfect candidate for attrition. To expect rapid changes in this field, however, would be naive. The opening wedge to a much-needed reform of the government apparatus might be the abolition of the spoils system for Communists and the introduction of a civil-service system under which government officials would be appointed on the basis of quality and not of adherence to the party. The substitution of a Communist for a loyal and able non-Bolshevik specialist which goes on all the time has ruined many a Soviet enterprise. A hint of this evil was contained in the railway-reorganization decree published on July 3 over the signatures of Stalin and Premier Molotov. The decree also contained a vague mention of qualification examinations. But the subject was treated so casually and received so little subsequent attention that it is obvious that the party either does not realize its importance or does not yet dare to tackle the problem of bureaucracy. But the stronger the state, the stronger the bureaucracy which feeds on it and grows with it like a parasite, and the more need there is of checks from within and control from below—of democracy, in other words.

Issues like bureaucracy must now engage the attention of the Kremlin. Economic matters are still a great concern. The standard of living must be lifted, distribution must be regulated, productivity raised, and so on and so on. But economic affairs have been more or less regularized. They run in a groove. Soviet economics, unlike those of many other countries, are neither in a state of drift nor at a stage of experimentation. There is a plan and there is progress. Much remains to be done, however, in social relations, in ethics, in culture and education, and in the relation of the individual to the state. If the Bolshevik revolution were ossified, if the Soviet government were suffering from arteriosclerosis, these tasks would be beyond it. But the revolution is young. The revolution is not ended. The recent elimination of many freakish practices testifies to a plasticity which augurs well for further evolution.

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# Jolts for the NRA

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

*Washington, November 11*

RETURNING to the capital after an absence of six weeks, I find an air of uneasiness which was not discernible when I departed. Friends of the Administration are obviously worried about the future, and nothing has contributed more to their anxiety than the gold-buying plan. The whole enterprise is wrapped in an atmosphere of mystery and uncertainty which comports strangely with the candor and directness which surrounded the launching of other measures. Whether it will achieve the objective of raising commodity prices, whether such rises can be maintained if they are achieved, whether increased costs of living will nullify any beneficial effects, whether the government is inviting retaliatory measures by other nations—these questions are on every tongue, but it is a task to find a judicious man who professes to know the answers. Among some of the President's most loyal and intelligent associates the fear is manifest that he has departed from an otherwise consistent and well-integrated program to embark on a doubtful and perilous adventure. Waiving every question of the soundness of his ultimate aims, the fact remains that any policy which produces and prolongs suspense on such a scale can hardly fail to have a blighting effect on recovery. If Mr. Roosevelt had elected to fortify and expand the industrial and agricultural recovery programs; if he had undertaken relief on a still vaster scale under the able direction of Harry Hopkins; if he had abandoned all thoughts of price-fixing for a system of taxation that would effectively restrain profiteering, the odds are that his feet would be on firmer ground today. As the case stands, we must rely on his willingness to scrap the plan if and when its futility is apparent, hoping that trial by fire will not leave too many blisters on the shins of the innocent.

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ANOTHER cause for concern is the rising tide of hostility to the NRA and the AAA. Seasonal lags have heretofore constituted a regular phase of industrial production, and General Johnson is not to blame because the present one arrived on schedule. By the same token, long before Henry Wallace was heard of, God in His infinite wisdom allotted certain periods of growth to pigs, steers, and edible grains. However, man's natural tendency is to attribute his trouble to the first object that meets his eye, and just now that object chances to be the Blue Eagle. Neither the Secretary nor the General is to be envied for his position. If factory wages and hours continue to improve, the farmers will redouble their cries against increased living costs. If they do not continue to improve, unemployment and suffering in the cities will provide new sources of unrest. What is most needed is patience on the part of those whose patience—if not endurance—was pretty well exhausted before last March. It is not pleasant to record that this painful situation has been gravely aggravated by the attitude of a substantial section of the press—and from motives that no amount of argument can make respectable. Incited by such paladins of liberty as Bertie McCormick and Lish Hanson, the papers have raised a hue and cry against Johnson, in whom they profess to see a diabolical ambition to curtail the "freedom of the press." To contend that the Bill of Rights was repealed by the Recovery Act is surely preposterous; and it is even sillier to argue that those rights, once withdrawn by Congress, could be restored by a provision in a code, yet that is exactly the ground taken by the publishers. Much of this irrational clamor arises from unwarranted suspicion and lack of elemental knowledge, but not all. Nobody could charge McCormick with possessing a suspicious nature. When Jake Lingle, a $65-a-week reporter, began showing up at the *Tribune* office in a chauffeur-driven limousine, it never occurred to his employer that something might be wrong. Not until the unfortunate reporter was assassinated in the heart of the Loop did McCormick begin to suspect that he might have been the recipient of emoluments from the underworld characters with whom he was known to be on intimate terms. It is therefore necessary to conclude that the publisher's seeming agitation derives from some other source, and I deem it significant that all this synthetic furor over "freedom of the press" has served to obscure the issues that were raised when representatives of the publishers' association refused to provide in their proposed code for the abolition of child labor, regulation of unfair trade practices, and collective bargaining with certain classes of employees. It is equally significant that organizations representing the element which is genuinely concerned with freedom of the press—that is, the editorial workers—are quite satisfied that it is not threatened. When it is, we may reasonably hope to see it defended by qualified champions. Jim Beck may be a "great constitutional lawyer" to the publishers, but to us who know him he is still Bill Vare's tame Congressman from the rotton boroughs of Philadelphia.

* * * * *

SELDOM does a day pass without organized labor missing another opportunity to strengthen its position under the NRA. An unaccountable tendency to confuse the right to strike with an obligation to do so has increased the difficulties and multiplied the embarrassment of administrators disposed to be friendly. Some of the strikes have been amply justified, and have actually assisted the NRA in bringing employers to terms. On the other hand, strikes have been called, and insurgent unions proclaimed, on no basis except that there was not enough work to go around. Perhaps the greatest mistake of all was made when the majority in the A. F. of L. convention elected to stand on the hidebound leadership and obsolete policies personified by Green and Tobin. By rejecting the principle of vertical organization in favor of the existing arrangement of overlapping and conflicting trade unions, the A. F. of L. effectively postponed the organization of the automobile industry and others, and alienated the friendly counsel and wise guidance of friends in the NRA. John Lewis and George Berry put up a gallant fight for the more enlightened course, but confronted with the blind conservatism of labor politicians and beset in the rear by the poisoned

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darts of so-called liberals, they failed. Labor will have abundant cause to rue that day. Every new secession in its own ranks, every new jurisdictional dispute, will be a weapon in the hands of the enemy. The passage of a year may mean the triumph of the policies advocated by Lewis, Berry, and Sidney Hillman; otherwise it can only mean a lost year of unequaled opportunity.

* * * * *

JIM FARLEY is back from the wars, licking his wounds, and Mr. Roosevelt is left to meditate on the folly of subordinating his own political judgment to that of a henchman who was unable to see beyond the dream of a seat of power in the Tammany wigwam. Whether he will take the lesson to heart sufficiently in the future to rely only on his own unexcelled acumen, is a matter for debate. He has been amply warned. Reviewing the facts, it is difficult to conjure up a worse exhibition of political stupidity than Farley's ill-starred, ill-timed, and ill-judged adventure with McKee. For all their natural handicaps, Curry and O'Brien shone in comparison with the Warwick of the Post Office. He committed all the known strategical blunders, and invented new ones for the book. He chose to risk Roosevelt's prestige in a situation where it was not involved, and managed to emerge from it with a maximum of discredit for himself and his chief. He could have combed New York without finding a man whose professions of principle and record of performance were more closely akin to the spirit of the New Deal than Fiorello LaGuardia's. Not a scintilla of threat to the Administration was implied in the Major's candidacy. The ineffable Farley deliberately converted a powerful ally into a formidable antagonist. Let no one suppose that the performance escaped the notice of Democratic Congressmen. If Jim makes the further mistake of essaying to crack the whip during the approaching session, he will learn precisely what the hillbillies of the South and West think of his prowess as a politician. And he will have to listen and like it.

# Haiti's "New Deal"

By HUBERT HERRING

*Port-au-Prince, Haiti, November 5*

EN route to the Seventh Pan-American Conference at Montevideo, my airplane stops at Port-au-Prince. Here the burning topic of discussion is the executive agreement signed on August 7 by Albert Blanchet, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Haiti, and Norman Armour, the American Minister. When it was executed, our State Department, for the second time in less than a year, drew a long breath and pronounced the Haitian question settled. Radio broadcasts from the State Department indicated that this settlement was proof that the New Deal had shown itself also in Latin American relations. But all Haitians with whom I talked felt quite otherwise. They included senators, deputies, men long conspicuous in the public life of the republic. They did not hesitate to declare the executive agreement a betrayal of Haiti's hopes and legitimate aspirations. They asserted that the Haitian people had been tricked.

The new arrangement, they say, differs in no material respect from the treaty which the Haitian Congress rejected without a single dissenting voice some fourteen months ago. That treaty provided in effect that the military occupation should expire with the treaty of 1916, and that at about that time, 1936 or a little earlier, the higher ranks in the Garde, the national constabulary so long officered by marines, should be filled by Haitians. So far, so good. That much every Haitian expected and welcomed. The United States had no mandate to stay beyond May 1, 1936. But what was the amazement of the Haitians to find that while the marines went out, the bankers stayed in! The treaty provided for a rigid financial control of Haiti for the life of the National City Bank loan, final amortization of which is not due till 1952. For that period, according to this new treaty, American officials would collect the customs and internal revenues, making the service of the loan the first charge and their own expenses of salaries and supervision the next. Haiti and its interests, its schools, its government salaries, its national life—these all came after. During the life of the loan the treaty provided that American officials appointed by the President of the United States should have control of the budget—which must be balanced. (There was some humor in this insistence by the Hoover Administration upon a balanced budget.) Moreover, Haiti could not modify its taxes or tariff duties without the permission of the American financial control. Indignation reached a new high pitch in Haiti. The Congress met. It studied the project, and without a single dissenting voice both houses rejected the treaty. Congress then adjourned, not to meet again until April, 1933.

Conceive of the stupefaction of the Haitian public when it learned that on August 7 last what was essentially the same treaty had been negotiated again! Only this time it was called an "executive agreement," with the tacit assumption that it need not go to the Senate of either country for approval. There were some slight modifications, but the financial clauses are virtually identical with those of the rejected treaty. They provide that a fiscal representative, who doubtless will be the same one now in control of Haitian finances, with employees and assistants not to exceed eighteen, shall have control of the customs service. Again the service on the loan is the first charge. Again the expenses of the American collectors become the second charge. Again Haitian affairs come last. Again the government of Haiti is forbidden to reduce its tariff or modify its taxes without the consent of the fiscal representative.

Intelligent Haitians are up in arms against this humiliating agreement. They demand an explanation for the subterfuge under which it was signed as an "executive agreement" instead of being submitted as a treaty to the senates of Haiti and the United States. They assert bitterly that after the long record of force and fraud by which the will of bankers and concessionaires has been imposed on Haiti through the military power of the United States, this concluding trickery is shameful beyond belief. They say, in short, that it means little to them to have the marines get out if the financiers are to stay in.

To the writer, it is amazing to see the Administration that has repeatedly denounced the money changers playing the game of the National City Bank and its bond-holders in this helpless country. At home the United States Senate, presumably with the consent of the Administration, is disclosing how the bankers have mulcted the American people. New legislation is designed to prevent more of the same kind

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of looting. But in Haiti nothing is changed. The chicanery of the past is solemnly reenacted. That, say the Haitians, is all the New Deal amounts to.

# In the Driftway

IN his scrapbook the Drifter is making a careful collection of Little Paradises which he hears about from time to time. In this way, when the time comes for him to retire from drifting and settle down to a life of leisure (Chorus: "What do you call your life now, hey?"), he will be able to make the sort of reasoned and informed choice that will mark him as a member of the intelligentsia or non-ruling class. The following letter, written on the letterhead of the City of Charleston, Office of Port Development, and giving every evidence of officialdom and authenticity, is hereby pasted into the scrapbook forthwith:

DEAR SIR: As a writer looking for conditions conducive to good fiction or articles on Americana, you will be more than satisfied with what Charleston has to offer. The climate in winter is superior to that of southern Mediterranean resorts and food, rentals, and entertainment costs are surprisingly low. A moderate income will enable you to live comfortably and enjoy considerably more hunting, golfing, fishing, and social privileges than in other sections of this country.

It has been enthusiastically stated by nationally and internationally known writers that the city is an ever-present source of inspiration. . . . The Plantation Era, now coming forward as a leading fictional background, was more highly developed here than elsewhere in the old South, and today plantations are being conducted as in former years, many of them by wealthy and interested Northerners . . . New York is reached in a few hours by plane, and steamers and trains maintain excellent schedules.

* * * * *

THERE are, of course, one or two objections to this particular Utopia as a suitable place for the Drifter's declining years. For one thing he is not a writer of fiction, and hence could hardly benefit by the inspiring plantation life, conducted at present by enthusiastic Northerners, as a subject for his art. Moreover, he has never hunted, does not play golf, and would rather die than spend more than ten minutes in conjunction with any sort of fishing apparatus he ever saw. These limitations on his part might very well bar him from the social privileges mentioned in the Charleston letter. Nevertheless, there are other attractions in Charleston, in addition to these advices from the Port Development, which make it well worth considering as a Drifter's Retreat. For one thing the houses are mostly surrounded with high brick walls over which no prying eye can see or inquisitive leg can climb. And once you attain to the privacy of such a wall, keeping the world out, you may then practice on what is, for the Drifter, Charleston's chief delight—the joggling board on the side porch of all properly equipped Charleston houses. A joggling board, in case his readers do not know it, is something like a see-saw, only better. On it you joggle. And since no one can see over your wall, presumably you can joggle by the hour without interruption. If there is any more healthful exercise for an aged Drifter, a middle-aged Drifter has never heard of it. THE DRIFTER


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# Correspondence

## Books for a Workers' School

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

A workers' school is being established in a ten-room building which has just been opened in Columbus, Ohio, as the labor center for the unemployed. The National Unemployed League, the Ohio Unemployed League, and the office of the Franklin County League are all to be situated in this building, at 214 East Rich Street.

Along with field activities, such as relief strikes, eviction fights, demonstrations, adjusting of grievances, and many other problems, the unemployed are asking for educational classes from the labor point of view. The school will provide classes in economics, history, sociology, labor history, trade unionism, economic geography, current events, English and public speaking, Marxism, labor dramatics, a training class for song leaders, a leisure-time class in art especially for children of the unemployed, and a workshop for maps, charts, and posters to be made by the students in an effort to promote visual education.

Local friends and sympathizers are donating chairs, desks, and other furnishings. But books, newspapers, and magazines are difficult to get. We ask your readers to help us in this enterprise by contributing any books your readers may have to build up a workers's library, or by donating whatever they can toward a book fund. Labor papers and magazines will be greatly appreciated by the unemployed, who cannot buy these things. A typewriter would be of great assistance also.

*Columbus, Ohio, November 1* ARNOLD JOHNSON
Director Organization, Ohio Unemployed League
National Secretary, National Unemployed League


# JOURNEY of the FLAME

**By Fierro Blanco**

*From the Book*

"We fear no King nor any devil; only God when he is just."

"Of right and wrong I am no judge, having been born poor."

"Honesty to a friend but courtesy to an enemy until God opens a way for our knives."

"There is a time for all things except gettng drunk, and some say that had I married, I would make no exception."

"Father Tamarel preached hell-fire in the coolest weather. 'Father, lead us to that eternally warm place,' the Indians cried, as unclothed they shivered in chill north winds. But Father Tamarel, incensed by the demand of his Indian flocks for hell fires, curtly refused them the warmth they thought he controlled. Whereupon, rising in rebellion, they killed him and others, saying: 'They refuse us their comfortable hell. Why should we serve these cruel foreigners?' "

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# Books, Films, Drama

## Ask No Return

By HORACE GREGORY

Ask no return for love that's given,
embracing mistress, wife, or friend,
ask no return:
on this deep earth or in pale heaven,
awake and spend
hands, lips, and eyes in love,
in darkness burn,
the limbs entwined until the soul ascend.

Ask no return of seasons gone:
the fire of autumn and the first hour of spring,
the short bough blossoming
through city windows when night's done,
when fears adjourn
backward in memory where all loves end
in self again, again the inward tree
growing against the heart
and no heart free.

From love that sleeps behind each eye
in double symmetry
ask no return,
even in enmity, look! I shall take your hand;
nor can our limbs disjoin in separate ways again,
walking, even at night on foreign land
through houses open to the wind, through cold and rain,
walking alive, meet, kiss, and understand.

## The Skepticism of Thomas Mann

*Past Masters.* By Thomas Mann. Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

THE eleven essays which compose this volume were written over a period of about twenty-five years. They range in length from eighty pages to a bare four, and in subject matter from an elaborate analysis of the genius of Wagner to an informal confession of the author's delight in those ordinary movies where, as he puts it, "the silliness or sentimentality is set in a frame of scenic and mimic detail which is true to life and to reality, so that the human triumphs persistently over the crude falsity of the performance as a whole." In between they include a critique of Spengler's theory, a discussion of Culture and Socialism, and a defense of Freud against the possible charge that he is responsible for that return to a reliance upon primitive impulse which is dominating political life today.

For him, Herr Mann explains, essays are generally by-products of fiction, the result of an effort to think out in explicit terms the problems implicit in the novels, and for this reason if for no other they furnish a valuable commentary upon the work of one of the greatest—but certainly not one of the most easily understood—of modern writers. Even in them, however, the reader will be disappointed if he expects simplicity or hopes to find the author pinning himself down to any easily definable position. His explicitness is seldom completely explicit, and the essays, like the novels, leave the reader with the sense that he has been participating in the broodings of a profound and complex mind so inveterately speculative that only the general direction taken by the thought can be clearly specified. Unequivocal expressions of opinion are rare, not because the author wishes to make himself elusive, but because he tends to walk around every landmark and to survey the surrounding country. His essays do not usually point out the road to a definite conclusion. They are, on the contrary, reports of elaborate and patient reconnoiters upon which he asks us to accompany him.

Perhaps, however, the problem most nearly central to his thought is that which he broaches in connection with his discussion of the claims of Kultur versus the claims of civilization. Neither of these terms is anywhere very elaborately defined, but one recognizes immediately the complex of ideas to which each refers and one can define them for one's self. Civilization—this particular concept of which originates in French "enlightenment"—is eclectic, liberal, rational, and relativistic. Its ideal is the tolerant citizen of the world, the representative of that cultivation which is the antithesis of "culture" in the purely anthropological sense. On the other hand, the conception of Kultur is nationalistic and absolutist because it rests ultimately upon the belief that absolute standards *for any particular society* are to be found in the way of life peculiar to it; in the interrelated moral, aesthetic, and social ideas which make, with its political institutions, a whole. Obviously nineteenth-century democracy is based upon the idea of civilization, while communism and the fascisms of both Italy and Germany are based upon the idea of Kultur. No less obviously Herr Mann, when he is forced to make a choice, sides with democracy and civilization. But it is typical of him that he should not find the choice wholly satisfactory and that he should be compelled at times to argue against himself. He is a good European, but he reads no foreign language with real pleasure, and he is compelled to confess that he became a cosmopolitan through the reading of Goethe and Schopenhauer, Luther and Nietzsche—who were, to make it more confusing, not themselves democrats, and who, moreover, created "that Kultur with a big K which formed the power center of German war ideology." What position can a German cosmopolitan safely take up and how can he resist the impulse to be as German as possible, when he realizes that German literature became part of world literature by virtue of the fact that its great writers were less cosmopolitans than exponents of a particular Kultur?

Doubts as subtle and complicated as these are highly characteristic not only of Herr Mann's essays but of his novels as well. These latter, indeed, seem at times almost to owe their existence to a never quite decisive contest between two sets of opposing ideas—the idea of democracy versus the idea of the hierarchy and the idea of the artist versus the idea of the good citizen. Quite clearly the author recognizes in himself the predominance of the artist with his multiform sensibilities and his almost inevitable predisposition to a kind of iridescent decay. Yet in both "Death in Venice" and "The Magic Mountain" he cannot refrain from dwelling upon the weaknesses of the type or from celebrating by implication the health of the soldier or the tradesman which he persistently contrasts with the sickliness of the artist's temperament. As a writer he has moments, at least, when he doubts the writer's function, and as a democrat he has moments when he feels bound to defend a hierarchical society. It seems almost, indeed, as though he were determined to lean backward in his effort to be fair to his intellectual opponents, and that in "The Magic Mountain," for example, the representative of Catholic absolutism is given very clearly the best of the argument with the romantic liberal. One would never guess that the author himself is a protestant democrat, just as one would never guess from those other pas-

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sages in which the repulsiveness of psychoanalysis is dwelt upon that he is, besides, a defender of Freud.

Inevitably Herr Mann, with his doubts and his hesitations, will find himself with many enemies on both sides of the fence. Already he has been criticized for taking refuge in Switzerland "above the battle." One will not find in his works the war cry of the partisan. One will read him only if one is inclined to believe that in even the most troublous times there is still a place for a continuously exploratory skepticism.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

# Workings of the Spirit

*History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century.* By Benedetto Croce. Translated from the Italian by Henry Furst. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

THIS is not a history in the ordinary sense of the word but a work which aims at higher things. It is made up of allusions to events in Europe from the Congress of Vienna to the outbreak of the World War, selected by the writer to illustrate his philosophy of history. Croce, as is generally recognized, is an ardent but critical admirer of Hegel. His stupendous assumptions bewilder most historical writers of the baser sort and certainly unnerve the present reviewer. It seems something like this. In the beginning was the Spirit. All things were made by it; and without it nothing has occurred that has occurred. It has been the light that illuminated its own works and saw that they were good. Naturally the darkness apprehended it not.

Hegel was reduced to tears when the picayune revolution of 1830 came. The World Spirit seemed to have made a bad blunder. Croce, on the contrary, after a century more of the realization of the spirit is confidently cheerful. He seems to be revealing his own views when he points out that the varied discontents throughout Europe that followed the "Napoleonic adventure" were "linked in a single chain, and sooner or later one drew another along after itself, and brought to light still others that could be seen in the distance. And over all of them rose one word that summed them all up and expressed the spirit which had given them life—the word *liberty*." Man came to see that he was not belittled by history; that the past was not a "shameful memory" making necessary a vindication of himself. "Instead, a true and tireless creator, he looked on himself in the history of the world as he looked on himself in his own life. No longer did history appear destitute of spirituality and abandoned to blind forces. . . . Now it was seen to be the work and the activity of the spirit, and so, since spirit is liberty, the work of liberty." While history reveals a negative element of subjection, "with its constraints, its oppressions, its reactions, and its tyrannies," all these which we are apt to account "untoward events" are really "opportunities."

This exhilarating conception of history suggests Hegel's threefold logic—thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. This is the logic of the spirit; it is apparent in the actual conduct of human affairs and is essential to their understanding. We might say rather prosaically that action must provoke reaction; advance begets opposition; and the "synthesis" is the spirit's way of getting ahead.

The whole interest of Croce's book lies in his interpretation of the happenings to which he alludes, for in order to follow his comments one would have to review some competent college manual dealing with the events of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He assumes at least this much knowledge on his reader's part. Then he invites him to view the historical events in terms of the spirit and liberty, and of "untoward" occurrences which he believes to be only the inevitable Hegelian "antithesis," namely, "opportunities" for the seemingly devious but really inerrant realization of the spirit. But all interpretations of recorded history are really matters of taste. And as the old saying goes, there is little profit in quarreling about tastes. It is erroneously supposed that philosophers and those with such an exceptional range of knowledge as Croce's are exempt from taste in beliefs. But this is not the case. He *likes* to express his most fundamental convictions in terms of "spirits." This has been a most congenial form of expression to mankind through the ages. It still prevails, and one can avoid a good deal of trouble by just saying the spirit of Christianity, the spirit of science, the spirit of the Orient, the spirit of Germany, without analyzing the terms.

There have been many interpretations of history before Croce's—Christian, patriotic, rationalistic, scientific. There is the Marxian economic interpretation which has so profoundly influenced world conflicts of late. "Capitalism," "communism," "class struggle," "materialism" have an animistic flavor. Spengler sees history writing "downfall" on the wall. In short, history is a patient creature and anyone may ride it anywhither. This is distinctly a figure of speech and I trust betrays no animistic tendencies. Croce's supreme spirit and all the subordinate spirits which he introduces from time to time seem more than rhetorical personifications, they are animistic. But when we consider that mankind has from a very early period down to the present moment operated on the basis of animism, perhaps Croce's interpretation of history is, as he would claim, just history.

JAMES HARVEY ROBINSON

# Outside Looking In

*The Life and Friendships of Dean Swift.* By Stephen Gwynn. Henry Holt and Company. $3.75.

THOUGH the Irish like to think that they and they only can understand Swift, his best biographers have belonged to other nations. Readers who expect this book by Stephen Gwynn to throw new light into dark places in Swift's mind will be disappointed. Mr. Gwynn has taken Swift as he has found him in the familiar records and has pieced his career together in a design which has no striking novelty. But the new narrative is readable and enlightened, and it is full enough to show Swift moving about his affairs and among his friends in lifelike colors and dimensions. The terrific force with which he wrote about even ordinary matters has not led Mr. Gwynn to make the mistake of believing that Swift was always as dramatic as he sounded. His latest biographer realizes that Swift's tragedy was in Swift's nature, and in his own conception of his circumstances. Outwardly he looked successful. Both as writer and man he was immense. Nobody else ever had better friends or more worshipful admirers. He was a classic and a legend while he was still alive and could enjoy his honors. It is the outward Swift whose life Mr. Gwynn has written, and he makes his hero a natural man, not a frustrate genius inwardly consumed by secret fires. That there were mysteries Mr. Gwynn perceives as well as anybody. But he leaves them in their darkness and deals with what he has a chance to see. He has told about Swift the things that most men will want to know.

Yet Swift's essential mystery will go on tantalizing those who inquire into it. In the curved universe of the heart too much hatred is as suspect as too much love. Extremes run the risk of meeting. It is difficult not to feel that Swift's misanthropy was simple love turned to hate, the two emotions being so close together. A lover is indifferent to a mistress whom he no longer loves. He hates her only if the seeds or scars of love are still in him. Swift perhaps never understood the crossed nerves of his love and hate, and they have not been wholly dis-

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entangled by the explanations of any biographer. But he seems to have been compelled to hate the world for the cruelty, stupidity, and ugliness which he found beside, and instead of, the pity, intelligence, and beauty which his love demanded. Frustrate, he covered up his hurt with the language of scorn and anger, or at least of self-respecting, self-preserving contempt. Nor need it be incredible that he did not lose his head in windmill rages when he wrote. Comedy was as native to him as English, and he was the perfect master of his lively art. In his blackest rage he could no more lose the power of laughter than another man, in the same rage, could forget the multiplication table.

CARL VAN DOREN

## Fiction Imports

*One More River.* By John Galsworthy. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.
*Vanessa.* By Hugh Walpole. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.
*Gipsy Wagon.* By Sheila Kaye-Smith. Harper and Brothers. $2.50.
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*Radetzky March.* By Joseph Roth. The Viking Press. $2.50.
*Tiger Juan.* By Ramón Pérez de Ayala. The Macmillan Company. $2.

SO many literary Baedekers have strung so many stars opposite the names of the first two English authors listed above that the question of their true literary value will probably be obscured in the popular mind for a generation or more. Yet without the least desire to disturb the taste of the average reader it is only just to point out that in his last novel Mr. Galsworthy repeats himself and makes meager use of his material, and that Mr. Walpole not only repeats himself but repeats an amazing amount of cheap literary fictions and tricks from here, there, and everywhere. Suffice it to say, therefore, that "One More River" is the last obstacle Dinny Charwell must overcome before she finds a happy marriage, and that this body of water is the symbol of her sister Clare's divorce, an occurrence permitting Mr. Galsworthy to call attention once more to certain shameful flaws in England's divorce laws. If you like the short, swift, character-revealing dialogue that has fled through most of the Galsworthy plays and so many pages of the novels, the first half of this book will be rewarding. Unfortunately this is the best that can be said. The procedure required for such a case as Clare's is as nasty and ridiculous as the law which compels it is uncompromising and archaic, but more poignantly drawn characters and situations are needed to challenge effectively the generalization about human nature on which the law is based, partly because, as always in Galsworthy, the basic moral is not fully debated, and partly, it would seem, because at the end a very practiced hand had grown tired.

Once I regretted that Mr. Walpole was such a poor second-rate writer—I now take the opportunity of stating without any regrets that so far as "Vanessa" is concerned he is a most lamentable third-rate writer. The book is an endless confusion of dull, familiar family gossip, of unsuccessful attempts to erect a panoramic background of the last fifty years in England in a hybrid "Only Yesterday"-"Cavalcade" manner, and of pages padded with the careers of all living Herries, parents and children. Whether the amount of genealogical data equals the number of expressions of Herries's satisfaction with Herries and of Herries's conviction that England could never have been England without them is a question which may well remain rhetorical. Mr. Walpole's desire to tell all manages to deaden the impression of Vanessa's and Benjie's love story. What re-

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mains is the suggestion that Benjie might have been an interesting character but that he never had a chance in that family.

Since Sheila Kaye-Smith is content to respect her talent for a simple story well told, her description of the disappearance of the yeoman class in Sussex is quieter and more ominous than the hysterical decline of the Herries of the Lake region. In the metamorphosis of Fred Sinden from his ancient character of plowman into that of itinerant laborer there is a sense of the calm inevitability with which the bloodless revolution is moving today in England. In the scenes in Sussex's counterpart of Hooverville there is a light but accurate reflection of the inconsequence of the individual in all deep changes over which the individual has no control. The story is told as artlessly as a folk-tale, a very modern and elucidating folk-tale.

Like these other English writers, Michael Home has no connection with the innovating, experimental group of his countrymen, the Huxleys and Woolfs. Neither, on the other hand, is "Return" in the manner of the social-historical novels of these first three. It is another biographical account which makes me wonder if the author of "Of Human Bondage" has ever regretted setting that precedent. There is a doleful similarity in the *éducation sentimentale* of all these Maugham-bred heroes of England. This time a bright, sensitive boy comes from a poor, common home, and despite his intelligence is caught in an emotional web which almost ruins his life. Mr. Home has resorted to characterization for his originality, and in the long-suffering, modest, generous figure of Margaret, the hero's mother, he has done a better piece of work than anywhere else in the book. But this does not raise the novel above its class.

Of the two Continental writers, Joseph Roth has also been tempted by the family-history-panoramic theme. In broad outline his story spans the Austria ruled by Francis Joseph. The first Trotta saves the young emperor's life at Solferino; the third Trotta falls with his army in 1914; while the second survives his monarch by a few days. Wisely this author has placed his emphasis on the life of the third Trotta, a young man whose career follows what used to be a fairly regular sequence for army officers in Eastern Europe—wine, women, and gambling debts. It was a social pattern that remained rigid for nearly a century and furnished material for more than one operetta and novel. Mr. Roth has modified the conventional Viennese design by using as a background the old Ukrainian frontier of the Hapsburg empire. There where Russia and the empire met in menacing swamplands were isolated outposts of the armies, straggling frontier villages filled with provincial nobles, peasants, soldiers, Jewish usurers, and a shifting crowd of traders dealing in everything from feathers to women. It was a suffocating atmosphere of which Mr. Roth has made good use in a highly sentimental novel.

Enough of the original Spanish character of Señor Ayala's book is left to make reading it a strange enjoyment, yet not enough is left to arouse the great enthusiasm here which Spain has accorded it. Lost, especially, are the associations of its native language, associations existing in the words of any language (which even the best translations must miss), whose loss is felt here particularly because this book represents such an essentially Spanish attitude of mind. The result is an impoverishment of the rich symbolism of the characters and plot. In the Spanish the modern variation of the Don Juan motif—the contrast of Tiger Juan, the simple, virile, honest storekeeper, with Vespasiano, the irresponsible, sterile, petty philanderer—seems important. In English the peculiar Jesuitical rationalization of the love story by the characters—largely because such rationalization has no part in our special brand of romanticism—seems arid. There remain, however, the sharp characterizations, the excellent portrayal of provincial life, and much of the grotesque humor which make Ayala so popular among his countrymen.

FLORENCE CODMAN

# Warnings from the Engineer

*The Power Age.* By Walter N. Polakov. Covici-Friede. $2.
*The Machine Unchained.* By Leo Hausleiter. Translated from the German by Margaret M. Green. D. Appleton–Century Company. $3.

KARL MARX has been looked upon, properly, as the spokesman of the oppressed proletarians of the world. We have attributed to him bitter reflection and fierce, revengeful challenge. He has dominated the ranks of the economic opposition. But this was only half of the role of Marx. His courage was supported by his insight. He was more constructive than destructive. He understood the creativeness of machine capitalism just as well as its cruelty. He was as much a champion of the engineer as of the unemployed. In the inevitable march of change he foresaw science freeing mankind.

It is significant that, two generations after Marx's work was done, it is the engineers and men of science, rather than the economists, who recognize the force of his analysis. The slide rule and the formula, reinforced concrete in power dams, petroleum in internal-combustion engines have invalidated the old economic precepts. What more natural than that those who construct and employ these instruments should be most keenly aware of their portent? Political economy itself is slipping into the background; the carburetor is more important than the cartel; social forces are made to serve directed physical forces.

The two books here reviewed have the same thesis. They are both warnings from the engineer to the economist. Mr. Polakov's volume is the more straightforward and unmistakable of the two. Margaret M. Green's spirited translation of Hausleiter's work cannot conceal its peculiarities; its nervous style reminds the reader of dancing black shadows on the wall; it is really the raw materials of an essay rather than a coherent preachment; in places it deliberately confounds confusion. The two books read together show Europe and America brought simultaneously face to face with the same dilemma—scrap the power machine or scrap the theory and practice of competition.

We are presented with the excruciating paradox of poverty in the midst of and because of plenty. The poor porter is brought to the loaded table of Sindbad, only to discover that riches may sicken as much as hunger. Mr. Polakov shows that the "second industrial revolution," signalized in hydroelectric development, is so different in degree from the first as to be different in kind. In the machine age scarcity remained a foil to productivity, but in the power age the resistance of insufficiency has vanished, and we are about to step off into the abyss. The only bridge is that of new social institutions, and these must be fabricated rapidly.

Hausleiter, by way of remedy, is inclined to linger in the purlieus of control, relying upon autonomous mobilizations of private capital, though with many more misgivings than the infatuated Mr. Swope. Polakov is persuaded that economic reorganization must begin at the beginning; he recognizes that preservation of profit margins through price elevation is the enemy of technological progress, and that technological advance is an irresistible force. The shade of Friedrich List rises to bless the conclusion of both these authors that economic nationalism can only be the preliminary of world free trade. Standardization destroys separatism. Just as the knight in battle found his cuirass weighing him down, so tariffs now strike the power age with palsy.

Power machinery, as Marx foresaw, has brought within our grasp—has emptied into our lap—abundant means of life if only we will have them. Where the economic radical used to plead that we drop inhibitions, the engineer now sternly commands it.

BROADUS MITCHELL

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# A Call to Arms

*The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror.* Prepared by the World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism. With an Introduction by Lord Marley. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

IN his introduction to "The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror" Lord Marley sums up the purpose of this commentary on the Leipzig trial of the men accused of the burning of the Reichstag as follows: "This book aims at keeping alive the memory of the criminal acts of the Nazi government. It is a contribution to the fight against Hitler fascism. The fight is not directed against Germany; it is a fight on behalf of the real Germany."

The "Brown Book" contains the first authentic life-story of Van der Lubbe, the provocateur, whose testimony Göring has presented to the world as connecting the Communists of Germany with the Reichstag fire. He is shown as the son of a small shopkeeper, who was ejected from the labor organization in Holland to which he briefly belonged, and who after his first visit to Germany had "homosexual connections with National Socialist leaders," on whom he was wholly dependent for his material well-being. Count Helldorf, storm-detachment leader of Berlin, introduced him to the men intrusted with the firing of the parliament building.

The chapter dealing with the Reichstag fire reads like a thrilling mystery story, though it registers each successive incident connected with this momentous event with the sobriety of a court record. It calls attention to and proves thirty-one contradictions in the official records of the Reichstag-fire investigations. It presents documents and the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses to prove that the palace of the president of the Reichstag, Göring's official residence, was the strategic point from which the incendiaries entered the Reichstag building, directed by Göring and Goebbels and led by the feme murderers Heines and Schulz and the pogrom aristocrat Count Helldorf.

The second part of the book concerns itself with the regime of terror that followed the Reichstag fire. In telling phrases it reports the destruction of the legal organizations of labor, the storming of trade-union headquarters, Hitler's fight against the Socialist and Communist parties, and the Nazi campaign of destruction against modern culture—the burning of the books, the terror in the universities and other institutions of learning, the persecution of liberal and proletarian writers. It presents a register of the scientists and artists placed under a ban by the German government, together with a heartrending description based on 536 protocols of the tortures and degradations to which these victims of the brown terror were subjected. It gives a terrible picture of the persecution of the Jew in the Dritte Reich and substantiates this recital with a searching analysis of Nazi anti-Semitism that shows up the official enmity of the National Socialist Government toward the Jew as a gigantic maneuver to distract the attention of the people while it fulfils its real mission, the protection of capitalist monopoly under the cover of denunciation and hatred. Reports from concentration camps in which tens of thousands of Communists, anarchists, Socialists, liberals, and anti-Fascists are being held behind barbed wire at the point of Nazi bayonets refute the stories told by newspaper correspondents who were led through these concentration camps by Nazi guides. A murder list of more than 250 names shows the extent of the anti-Fascist movement in Germany.

The "Brown Book" is a call to arms. It summons the peoples of the world to battle against the incendiaries of the Berlin Reichstag, against the murderers of German labor and the sadism of the Brown Shirt, against Fascist dictatorship and

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## JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says

AH, WILDERNESS! Guild Theater. Tender and humorous story of a young boy trying to grow up. Highly entertaining but not one of O'Neill's major works.

AS THOUSANDS CHEER. Music Box. Hilarious series of hard-hitting satirical sketches in a first-rate musical review. Clifton Webb, Leslie Adams, Helen Broderick, and Marilyn Miller help make it the best thing of its kind.

CHAMPAGNE, SEC. Shubert Theater. Irreverent adaption of "Die Fledermaus." Gay, inexhaustibly tuneful, and consistently diverting.

DOCTOR MONICA. The Playhouse. Reviewed this week.

DOUBLE DOOR. Ritz. Exciting but not too convincing melodrama based on the Wendel case.

HER MASTER'S VOICE. Plymouth Theater. Clare Kummer at the top of her form provides a full evening of her original and slightly delirious kind of wit. With Roland Young and Laura Hope Crews.

HOLD YOUR HORSES. Winter Garden. Joe Cook and Dave Chasen present some excellent illustrations of Mr. Cook's inventive genius in an otherwise routine musical show.

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING? Masque Theater. Irish comedy by Lennox Robinson. Reviewed next week.

LET 'EM EAT CAKE. Imperial Theater. Sequel to "Of Thee I Sing," with Victor Moore and the other stars in continuations of their former roles. Very funny in spots but marred by a good deal of lost motion.

MEN IN WHITE. Broadhurst Theater. The problems of a young doctor made into a surprisingly moving and absorbing play. Thanks to a superb production by the Group Theater it becomes one of the two current offerings which no one can afford to miss.

SAILOR, BEWARE! Lyceum Theater. Adventures of a sailor in love. Entertainingly bawdy comedy in which the sex life of our naval heroes is treated without reserve. (P.M.)

THE GREEN BAY TREE. Cort Theater. Powerful and absorbing psychological portrait of a cultivated and somewhat effeminate egotist. Probably the most original play of the year, and like "Men in White" not to be missed by anyone interested in the theater.

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Avon Theater. Historical farce-comedy centering about the pleasant old New England custom of bundling. Spicy, impudent, and genuinely amusing.

THE SCHOOL FOR HUSBANDS. Empire Theater. Arthur Guiterman and Lawrence Langner make a picturesque and flippant adaption of Moliere's "The School for Husbands." There is much difference of opinion concerning its merits as entertainment but I found it charming and funny, as well as not too far from the spirit of the original author. With June Walker and Osgood Perkins.

*Announcement* - - - - - -

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LUDWIG LORE

# Shorter Notices

*Sea Wall.* By L. A. G. Strong. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

If Sean O'Casey and James Joyce had never written, "Sea Wall" might have seemed a brilliant and devastating picture of modern Ireland. But unfortunately for his own prestige, Mr. Strong retells a story which "Juno and the Paycock" and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" have told only too well. This story is, in essence, the story of Ireland. Ireland, scarred by drink and political strife and religious hatred, comically ornamented with learning, is its battered, rakish heroine. Mr. Strong has not the emotional power or the humor or the technical equipment which gave the Joyce and O'Casey versions such acute and terrifying reality. He is, in consequence, handicapped from the start. His plot, quite different from his *story*, concerns a young boy who grows up in twin houses, Creina and Avourneen, on the Sea Wall at Kingstown. Very young he is conscious that there is something strange and wrong about the life of the two houses. Sometimes he lives with the Doctor and the Duchess in one house, sometimes with his father and mother in the other. Both the Doctor and the Duchess are peculiar: the Doctor is an intellectual drunkard with a dark past, who is given to stealing the silverware for a Saturday night spree; the Duchess is an improvident eccentric who retires to her bed at the end of every quarter to avoid duns from the tradespeople, and there composes patriotic poems in the manner of Thomas Moore. Nicky's parents, the handsome D'Oliers, who appear but once a year, are odd too, hot-tempered, dashing, and unhappy. Nicky devotes his youth to unraveling the mystery of crime and insanity which lies behind these people. Obviously, the plot is intriguing and romantic enough, yet it has little movement; it goes forward with jerks and starts. The book is overladen with descriptive passages, and over-preoccupied with the psychology of the boy, who is not nearly so interesting as the characters he puzzles about. Mr. Strong would have done better to find himself an unplowed field, and thereby to avoid certain inevitable comparisons.

*Poems.* By Marie De L. Welch. The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

Marie De L. Welch's precise and yet delicate drawings of small animals and of their sudden and startling beauty in the quiet of nature are very unusual poetry. This poet sees differently. Her verse is disciplined, almost austere, but reflectively emotional. She is a modern and never sentimental. Her mind takes in her scene with exactness, her emotions signify its meaning. There is rather too little passion in her work, but there is, in partial compensation at least, the contemplative mind, the mind that sees design and beauty. The result is that many of her poems have the quality of simple etchings. With very little elaboration in imagery or language, Miss Welch, employing the right word and only the right word, gains her desired effect. She brings the nature symbols of romantic poetry into fusion with a strictly classical simplicity of statement. Birds, deer, wild small animals send her into no rhapsody. Towers or trees give her no mystic vision. But all these contribute to her sense of life as form, perfection, balance. The result is that her poems remain in the reader's mind as pictures and patterns rather than as any stirring of incoherent emotions. Her technique is, for her own purpose, quite expert. What she has to say is said perfectly and it is therefore remembered.

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# Films

## An Academy of the Film

THIS week New York will see the opening of the Harry Alan Potamkin Film School, which is being founded under the auspices of the Film and Photo League, a section of the Workers' International Relief. There will be courses in screen technique (camera, lighting, projection), production (film structure, scenario, montage), film criticism, the history of the screen, and a separate course in the history of the Soviet film. It seems almost certain that the notion of founding such a school in this country was suggested by the success and prestige of the great academy of the screen in Moscow, whose faculty is made up of the greatest names in Russian directing, and whose purpose is to educate the people to a clearer understanding and more enthusiastic acceptance of the principles of proletarian government. But the Workers' school will undoubtedly follow to a large extent the "Plan for a Film School" outlined by its namesake some months before his death and published in the current *Hound and Horn*. Potamkin's school "would provide a complete training in the arts and sciences of the cinema for students professionally interested in the films. A degree from the school would be an equivalent of a Bachelor of Science from any established college." Mention of a degree suggests that Potamkin saw his school as an adjunct to some large university. In beginning as an independent enterprise it will have certain advantages, the chief of which is a freedom from the restrictions of academic financial and political organization. But at the same time it may suffer from the reduced opportunities to correlate its particular field with other related fields—like literature, painting, and the dance. The danger of a too specialized approach is augmented by another and even greater danger: the possibility that a school which has the workers' immediate interests so much at heart will be tempted, in its study and practice of the new art, to ignore much that is not *immediately* concerned with those interests. This is a danger that can be avoided if it will only be recognized that the Soviet film has become increasingly less effective, both as propaganda and as art, as it has become more direct and explicit in expressing its motives. The Workers' school will best serve both its own cause and the cause of the cinema by endeavoring to turn out better products of its kind than anyone else. By better one does not mean more logical or more convincing arguments in celluloid, but finer, more perfectly realized expressions of experience than have so far been achieved by the cinema in America.

Although compounded of enough hackneyed character-elements—the hard-boiled racketeer and his moll, the young pugilist corrupted by the fleshpots, the heart-broken promoter out of "The Iron Man"—"The Prizefighter and the Lady" (Capitol) moves along with such rapidity of pace and general smoothness of articulation that it becomes something very much better than the usual fight picture. If what is principally demanded in this type is a carefully prepared climax of ten rounds of good clean boxing, it must indeed be put at the top of the list. For here the contestants are not Hollywood matinee idols or their "subs" but personages of no less palpable reality than Messrs. Max Baer and Primo Carnera. The slugging match which they put on must be at least as exciting as any actual performance at the Garden. In fact, it must be in most respects more satisfactory: art is notoriously more effective than raw nature, and a fight in which all the punches are carefully arranged and ordered for our maximum psychological satisfaction is naturally more moving than one which depends solely on the workings of chance. Yet it is unfair to insinuate that the picture owes its success only to its appeal to our lower animal instincts or to the

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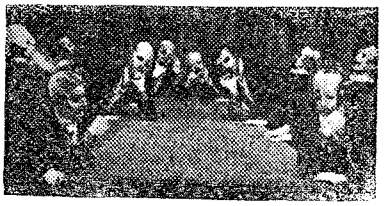
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presence of well-known celebrities in the cast. The direction has all the high-strung verve of Hollywood direction when it is turned on appropriate subjects. The photography in the fight sequences is good without being mannered or particularly enterprising. And the dialogue, in a number of places, makes new contributions to the American language.

WILLIAM TROY

# Drama

## Museum Piece

FOR reasons which are obscure but can hardly be adequate Alla Nazimova has elected to appear at the Playhouse in a slow-moving, lugubrious, and painfully old-fashioned drama entitled "Doctor Monica." According to the program it is adapted by Laura Walker from the Polish of Marja M. Szczepowska, and I have no cause to doubt the program's veracity, but there is nothing about the play to suggest any nationality. The scene is Vienna and the manner that perfectly international one which was developed a quarter of a century ago in every country to which the influence of Ibsen penetrated. Now that even the works of the master have come to seem in spots unnecessarily explicit in their laborious explanation of modern platitudes, there is no good reason for translating third carbon copies from the obscurer languages. "Doctor Monica" may well have been the pride of some Theatre Libre in Warsaw, but it is only a hopeless anachronism on contemporary Broadway.

The heroine is a woman doctor with a passion for babies and a scamp for a husband. We find her living for the moment in the apartment of a man-hating architect of her own sex, and it does not take long to discover that this is the play about the hard time which women have when they try to pretend that their work is enough. Dr. Monica has left her husband for a definite period in order that she may test his ability to stand alone. In the meantime she has undergone a dangerous operation to enable her to have a child and also taken under her wing a pretty young housemaid who has got herself in trouble of the usual sort. Can you guess what happens from there on, or am I wrong in supposing that one does not have to be a dramatic critic to know that Dr. Monica's husband will turn out to have been responsible for the housemaid's condition, that the man-hating architect will confess how she too once loved and lost, and that the play will end with the two women tearfully resolved to go on with their plans for a home for children? Perhaps I am; but even so, I am sure that there are at least no ears upon which the various *obiter dicta* about work, motherhood, and the like will not fall with a familiar ring, or which have not heard other and equally convincing defenses of the thesis that "man's love is of man's life a thing apart, 'tis woman's . . ." Nor could I, as I listened to this laborious demonstration of the obvious, help repeating to myself Mr. Chesterton's complaint against the painful and repetitious explicitness of Matthew Arnold: that he discoursed like the patient teacher of an idiot school.

For Madame Nazimova herself I have a deep admiration. It goes back perhaps twenty years to the time when I first saw her, and when, as the strange child in "The Wild Duck," she appeared to be the very embodiment of a morbid exoticism. I can see her still as she shook the bobbed hair out of her heavy eyes and can still remember how perfectly she symbolized, not Ibsen to be sure, but the whole vaguely apprehended world of un-American sensibilities. Only two years ago she showed in "Mourning Becomes Electra" the passion which is still in her, and even in "Doctor Monica" she has moments of grotesque power. But surely it is a pity that our theater is not able at the moment to provide anything better for her to do. A handful of people applauded her enthusiastically. Perhaps they were patriotic Poles, perhaps they were only loyal admirers of Nazimova. But of one thing I am sure. They were not representatives of any group large enough to keep "Doctor Monica" at the Playhouse very long.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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